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It may be proper to repeat the statement prefixed to the First Volume, that the substance of the present work, with assistance from all the standard writers already known familiarly to students of history, and with requisite modifications as to form and method, and in certain more important particulars, has been mainly drawn from the labours of a great living historian, altogether unknown to the English, and hitherto only known to the French reader through the medium of a wretched translation. If a work like that of SCHLOSSER* had appeared in France or in this country, it would instantly have employed half the translating and critical pens of Germany.

* Universalhistorische Uebersicht der Geschichte der alten Welt und ihrer Cultur.

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ERRATA.

- Page 73. line 4. for "show" read "shows."
96. line 16. for "poetry" read "philosophy."
132. line 20. for "capital" read "capitol."
133. line 11. for "capital" read "capitol."
144. line 1. for "cause" read "course."
198. in the head-line, for "of" read "from."
222. line 2. from bottom, for "Domina" read "Domna."
282. line 8. for "it" read "they."
301. line 4. from bottom, for "Byzantine" read "Byzantium."

HISTORY OF ROME.

BOOK IV.

THE LAST YEARS OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC.

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE FIRST TRIUMVIRATE TO THE BATTLE OF PHARSALIA.

THERE is much uniformity in the symptoms of national dissolution and ruin. When moral corruption and social inequalities have reached that point at which the promises of popular improvements, put forth, for the most part, solely as the stepping-stone of ambition, to the ears of the multitude signify nothing but hope of relief from ignoble wants, and of release from the restraints of public order, violent changes are inevitable, while reformation is all but hopeless. The highest fame can then be reached only in one of two ways; by setting every scruple at defiance to attain greatness, or by holding every earthly aim in contempt to preserve virtue. The highest force of character is required in such times for good or for evil; the genius of a Cicero and Pompey are rebuked by the crisis; the sovereignty of Cæsar or the death of Cato are the alternatives for towering and resolved spirits in times like these. The fortunate ambition of Cæsar, the unfortunate patriotism of Cato, are still the ideas commonly

connected with the two names. Yet tranquil enjoyment was the lot of the one as little as of the other; and if ultimate success be the test of well-directed endeavour, it is difficult to perceive how an usurper slaughtered on the steps of his throne, and leaving his unfinished work to be torn to pieces by struggling factions, can be considered to have ended his career more triumphantly than the patriot whose unconquerable will is to the last exercised, and who gives, in the then unreprieved form of a voluntary death, the last example of Roman resolution to his unworthy countrymen.

At the point of time at which we have now to resume the thread of events, the defeat of the Catilinarian conspiracy by the vigour of Cicero had thrown an invidious and dangerous lustre around his administration, and gave an appearance of stability to the governing body — namely, the senate. But it was soon found how little lasting reliance could be placed on a luxurious class, who seemed to think, in the words of Cicero himself, “that even if the republic should perish, they would be able to preserve their fish-ponds.” It might soon be foreseen that Cicero would pay dear for saving his party. It is morally certain, in all such cases, that unprincipled mob-leaders will find a pretext to represent a necessary act of severity as a causeless and tyrannical massacre. A momentary triumph of force, however justly exerted, is of no service beyond creating a momentary panic. The day after such a triumph, parties proceed to blacken its authors; and the miserable panders to the fury of a blind populace succeed in bringing impotence on the efforts of statesmen, around whom the moment before had rallied every friend of his country, in the firm and just conviction that their counsels were its last hope.

It is egoism in high places which gives power to the baser sort. It was the leading senators who betrayed the triumphant cause of the senate. Pompey, we have seen, had lately returned from his Asiatic achievements, and in the midst of his magnificent triumph felt that

he had returned to a theatre where he was no longer allowed the sole and undisputed ascendancy. Difficulties were thrown in the way of the ratification required from the senate of all the proceedings and measures which he had taken in his eastern province, it being necessary that all the regulations made in a conquered province should receive the formal sanction of that body. This was refused, one of the consuls v. c. (Metellus) being his personal enemy. Pompey had 693. married his sister, and had afterwards divorced himself from her. The other consul (Afranius) could afford him no assistance; and Lucullus, whom Pompey had robbed of the honour of terminating the war with Mithridates which he had carried on so long and so successfully, directed all his influence in the senate to oppose the confirmation of his successor's proceedings. Thwarted in the senate, Pompey was weak enough to throw himself into the arms of the popular party — that is, of Cæsar. He was ready to catch at any means for regaining his ascendancy. Cæsar was equally ready to coalesce with him and promote his purpose. Cæsar, in fact, who already had gained a high station in popular favour, saw perfectly well that the same party in the senate which watched to prevent Pompey engrossing its whole powers in his single person, would be likely to oppose his own ambitious projects in like manner. He could not gain means to form an army without Pompey's assistance, and the latter had not the least apprehension of being eclipsed by his rising greatness. The immediate object of Cæsar was the consulship — that of Pompey, the entire ratification of his acts and regulations in Asia. Gold was the principal means for making sure of the popular leaders, and of the neutral herd of senators who merely attended to give their votes. Accordingly, Cæsar wheedled the rich Crassus into reconciliation with Pompey, and won his alliance by holding out the prospect to him of sharing supreme power with himself and Pompey, without occasion for great efforts or extraordinary services.

The league between Pompey, Crassus, and Cæsar, known by the name of the first triumvirate, was by no means of a public nature, or calculated for all contingencies. Nor had Pompey and Crassus, at the time when they closed this unnatural compact with Cæsar, any design hostile to the existence of the aristocratic party to which they belonged. Cæsar, on his part, never had a serious thought of restoring to the people and their turbulent tribunes the power which was assigned to them by the ancient constitution, but only waited the time, when, having drawn to himself the lion's share of influence, treasure, and military force, he might rid himself with safety of his colleagues.

The first tacit engagement of the triumvirs was to procure the ratification of the whole of Pompey's proceedings in Asia. They resolved to carry Cæsar's election as consul for the next year; and through his agency, in the teeth of the opposition of the senate, to affix the public sanction to the above-mentioned proceedings.

The party of Lucullus, Cato, Cicero, and other friends of the existing constitution, soon, indeed, perceived that it would be impossible to effect the exclusion of Cæsar from the consulship. They were, however, equally convinced that Pompey and Crassus would never concur in violent measures against the established laws and legal authorities. Accordingly, they resolved to couple Cæsar with a colleague implicitly attached to their interest. Instead of Luceius, therefore, with whom Cæsar had formed a coalition similar to that which often takes place at elections in this country*, Bibulus was raised by the senatorial party to the consulship. On this ensued incessant disputes between the new consuls. The result was, that the proud grandees, who cared, as Cicero charged them with doing, more about their fish-ponds than their coun-

* "Luceium scito consulatum habere in animo statim petere: duo enim soli dicuntur petitori. Cæsar coire cum eo per Arrium cogitat: et Bibulus cum hoc se putat per C. Pisonem posse conjungi. Rides? Non sunt hæc ridicula, mihi credo." — *Cic. Epist. ad Attic.* lib. i. ep. 17.

try *, rendered themselves and their consul contemptible by giving him no effective support, and afforded Cæsar golden opportunities to win the favour of every class of citizens. He caused the Asiatic measures of Pompey to be confirmed by the people; he caused a commission of twenty to be appointed for indemnifying out of the public treasury the proprietors of lands to be apportioned amongst the poorer citizens. Moreover, by a concession prejudicial to the state-finance, without being advantageous to the payers of taxes in the provinces, he gained the equestrian order, a body of men who invariably preferred their money interests to the good of the state. This he effected by carrying a measure which had been thrown out, through Cato's opposition, in the senate, to release the revenue farmers from a third of the payments they had to make, under engagements into which they had entered with the public administration for the collection of the taxes in the newly conquered provinces, and in which it would seem their avidity had overshot its mark, by inducing them to bid too high for the contract. The final breach between Cæsar and his aristocratical colleague was occasioned by the opposition made by the latter, backed by the senate, to his proposition for the above-mentioned division of lands to the veteran soldiers of Pompey and other citizens. These allotments were to be carved from the best and richest lands in Campania; and the districts on the Sabbatus and Vulturnus, which had hitherto been appropriated to pious uses, were included in the plans of the commissioners. Against these provisions the senatorial party rallied their whole force. Bibulus proclaimed a solemn cessation of public business. But Cæsar had gained one of the tribunes, Vatinius, who excelled all his colleagues in audacity; and took upon himself, without a shadow of scruple, the odium and the infamy of violent measures. Bibulus

* "Nostri autem principes digito se cælum putavit attingere, si nulli barbati in piscinis sunt, qui ad manum accedunt, alia omnia negligunt."
—*Epist. ad Attic.* lib. i. ep. 19.

was driven from the forum by mob tumult, and kept in a state of siege in his own house. During the rest of his consular year he could only escape outrage by not only avoiding all assemblies of the people, but every solemn and important meeting of the senate. Even Cato was driven awhile into retirement by menace and violence.* Cicero, it was hoped, might be won; and an offer was made him of a place among the twenty commissioners. He hesitated long; and when, at length, he refused his adhesion, his arch-enemy Clodius, as we shall see, was pitted against him, and he was driven, in the following year, entirely out of the city.

Under these circumstances, it cannot appear wonderful that Cæsar fully succeeded in accomplishing his real objects. He severed Pompey completely from the aristocratical party, and rendered him contemptible by that separation†; bestowed on him his daughter Julia in marriage, and appeared to transact every thing with his concurrence. Cæsar and Pompey nominated consuls for the following year zealously devoted to their interests; and Cicero could not prevent them from raising the profligate Clodius to the tribuneship. In like manner, Cæsar, through the agency of Vatinius, obtained the assignment, for five years, as his province, of all Upper Italy and Illyricum, regardless of the Sempronian law, according to which the provinces could only be voted year by year. To this extensive province, thus illegally obtained from the people, the

* Plut. in Cat. Min. c. xxiii.

† Pompey's false position is thus sharply touched by Cicero (*Epist. ad Attic.* xi. 21.): "Itaque ille amicus noster, insolens infamix, semper in laude versatus, circumfluens gloria, deformatus corpore, fractus animo, quo se conferat nescit; progressum precipitem, inconstantem reditum videt; bonos inimicos habet, improbos ipsos non amicos. Ac vide molliticum animi! Non tenui lacrimas, cum illum, ante viii. Kal. Sextil. vidi de edictis Bibuli concionantem, qui antea solitus esset jactare se magnificentissime illo in loco summo cum amore populi, cunctis faventibus, ut ille tum humilis, ut demissus erat! ut ipse etiam sibi, non iis solum qui aderant displicebat! O spectaculum, uni Crasso jucundum, ceteris non item! nam quia deciderat ex astris, lapsus quam progressus, potius videbatur, et ut Apelles si Venerem, aut si Protogenes, Ialyæum illum suum cæno oblitum videret, magnum, credo, acciperet dolorem: sic ego hunc omnibus a me pictum et politum artis coloribus subito deformatum non sine magno dolore vidi."

intimidated senate added Transalpine Gaul (*comatam Galliam*).*

From this moment the Roman history singularly resembles that of the French republic, during the course of Napoleon's earlier achievements. In both, a feeble republican administration presides in the capital, which is the theatre of incessant agitation, kept up by conflicting parties, who find their account in any state of things rather than peace and quiet. In both, we find a general invested with unprecedented powers; the uncontrolled ruler of provinces, yielding in extent and importance nothing to a powerful empire: we find a man of superior genius, unscrupulous in his resolutions, and, whenever his interest dictates it, remorseless in his cruelties, proceeding in the most monarchical manner, under cover of the most democratical sentiments, and acquiring absolute power over the soldiery by virtue of his fortune and conquests. Cæsar at first obtained only four legions, and the ordinary complement of auxiliaries, in all a numerical force of about 40,000 men; but he contrived, by degrees, so skilfully to fabricate a necessity for augmenting the effective force of this army, that he succeeded, with the concurrence of the senate, in bringing up his legions to twelve; that is to say, in trebling his force. The whole of this force, enured to constant military service, had the most unbounded confidence in itself and in its general, and had experienced all sorts of hardships and deprivations.

Cæsar obtained the province of Gaul precisely at the most fortunate conjuncture for his military prospects. At that moment, the allies of Rome were threatened with invasion by the German and Helvetian tribes, and compelled to look about them for external assistance. Just as Cæsar appeared in Gaul, the Helvetians were preparing to quit their country, carrying with them their wives and children, and fight for a new settlement

* "As if," says Plutarch (in *Cat. Min.* c. xxiii.), "they would vote a citadel to their tyrant"—*ὡς εἰς ἀκρόπολιν τὸν τύραννον αὐτοὶ τοῖς ἑαυτῶν ψήφοις ἰδρύουσι.*

in Gaul. The Gallic tribes on the banks of the Saone, whose territory was first threatened by the descent of the Helvetians through the passes of the Jura, received the Roman legions as their deliverers, and facilitated their victory over the mountaineers, who fell in great numbers.

Having freed the Gauls from the terrors of this national immigration, Cæsar now directed his arms against the Germans, who had been led on a military adventure by their chief, Ariovistus, into Gaul, where their numbers had increased to 120,000 men. These Germans owed their entrance into Gaul to the feuds of the Gauls themselves. The Arverni and Sequani had invoked their aid against Ædui, and were the first to feel the formidable incumbrance of their presence. All the Gauls united implored the aid of Cæsar against the strangers. He did not need to be asked twice. The leader of the German hordes was already known to the Romans by transactions of an earlier date, and a title of honour had been procured him by Cæsar from the senate. He, therefore, attempted negotiation before resorting to force of arms. The German chief, however, was as haughty as the Roman general; negotiation was fruitless, and nothing remained but an appeal to arms. A battle was fought, not far from the modern Besançon, in which Ariovistus was slain. The Germans were forced to evacuate Gaul, where the Romans made preparations to quarter their troops permanently, under the pretext of protecting the land from the Germans, and keeping the peace amongst the native populations.

This prolonged stay of the Romans in Gaul aroused the apprehensions of the northern tribes, whose origin was probably mixed, between Celtic and German, who were linked in a certain union with each other, and included by the Romans under the common name of Belgæ. They mustered their strength, in order to meet force with force in case of necessity; and Cæsar sought to anticipate their movements. Meanwhile the Gauls, after the manner of all half-civilised nations, made repeated, and, for the most part, highly imprudent at-

tempts to expel the Romans, — singly to shake themselves free from the yoke, and surprise the several legions, or to rise in mass, and bury the whole army of Rome under the wreck of their own ruined possessions.

As we have only Cæsar's partial statements respecting these transactions in Gaul, it is impossible for us to decide who was the aggressor on every successive out-breaking of hostilities, or who was at last to blame for the general war. Cæsar himself, however, does not deny the commission of frightful cruelties, and the butchering execution of thousands, the hacking off of heads, the burning of cities, the devastation of whole districts, but excuses them as measures of necessity; sometimes even gives the numbers of Gauls murdered and enslaved, and does not disguise the use that he made of the plunder of the country, in order to attach his troops to his person. It is, however, certain, that he contrived so to conduct matters as to incorporate with the Roman empire France, as far as the frontiers of the Netherlands, the coasts of Bretagne, and the Pyrennees, and to establish a firm footing among the German tribes, who had driven the Gauls from the left bank of the Rhine, and had formed settlements there.

The reputation of the greatest of Roman generals, the renown of having accomplished things hitherto unheard of, Cæsar sought to attain from two undertakings, from which he expected no advantage either to himself or to the public; but which were calculated to give his expeditions all the charm of voyages of discovery; to impart to his campaigns a tinge of the marvellous of knightly adventure; and to invest his designs with the grandeur belonging to those of Alexander. These undertakings were his invasion of Great Britain, — the prototype of Napoleon's expedition to Egypt, — and his attempt to gain a footing on the right bank of the Rhine. The former adventure at least enriched the Romans with new acquisitions of knowledge: they acquainted themselves with the Northern Ocean, and came in contact with nations who made a

nearer approach to the savage state than the Gauls or Germans. Cæsar, however, did not think it advisable, considering the state of affairs at home, to linger amidst barbarian hordes, divided by seas from civilised Europe; and gave up, of his own accord, his conquests in Great Britain. His expeditions across the Rhine were merely short excursions.

Cæsar displayed, in all his military affairs and undertakings, those qualities of a leader, to the praise of which a separate chapter in his biography has been dedicated by Plutarch; who affirms (we would not vouch for the exactness of his enumeration) that, during his Gallic expedition, he took eight hundred towns by storm; vanquished three hundred tribes or nations; and was conqueror in forty pitched battles. In the course of these campaigns he engaged, on the whole, three millions of men; of whom he succeeded in slaying a million, and capturing a million more. The amount of money which, during his campaigns, he extorted from the conquered countries, or amassed out of the spoils of war, or obtained by confiscation of the possessions of those who deserted from his side, may be estimated from the data preserved of the increase in the public revenues, which he is said to have augmented by more than forty million sesterces; from the enormous sums which he arbitrarily raised for the pay of his troops in his province; but, above all, from the payment of his private debts from his share in the plunder.

While Cæsar was incessantly active in reinforcing his army in Gaul, and gaining its attachment to his person; in contending with revolts of separate districts, or of the whole country; in refitting, by extraordinary efforts, the fleets and armaments shattered by winds and tempests; or in carrying on war in the most disadvantageous circumstances, and marching over ground such as, perhaps, no leader had ever traversed,—his eye continued steadily fixed on the state of affairs in Rome itself, which now demands a share of our attention. The two chiefs of the old republican or

independent party, Cicero and Cato, had rather gained than lost in importance and influence: the motive of their exertions in the senate, and before the people, was suspected of no material alloy from private ends or private passions. It was necessary, therefore, to remove these two.

Here was fit employment for Clodius. The history of this man gives the clearest possible insight into the character of these times, and shows that it was a piece of refined policy in the statesmen at the head of affairs to permit some thoroughly turbulent fellow to make his appearance from time to time, to be used, now as a bugbear, now as a catspaw. Clodius was descended from a good family, and accomplished in all the talents and all the vices of his times. Notwithstanding he was at daggers drawn with Cato, he had supported Cicero in his proceedings against Catiline, though soon afterwards he attached himself to Cæsar, because the zealots for morality in the senate gave no quarter to his vices and extravagances. A love affair with Cæsar's wife had induced him to take the opportunity when the rites of the *Bona Dea* were performed at his house to disguise himself in female clothing; in order to obtain entrance along with the women assisting in the ceremony. His enemies in the senate seized the occasion of his intruding himself at a sacrifice where no male was allowed to be present, to procure a sentence against him as an offender against the Deity. In this they were baffled by the tumult and corruption which attended the trial; and Clodius, having obtained his adoption into a plebeian family, was, by the underhand aid of Cæsar and Pompey, made one of the tribunes.

The very commencement of Clodius's tribuneship seemed to shake the constitution to its base; for he carried four laws, every one of which upset some regulation of the former times. First, he procured a decree for the gratuitous distribution of corn, which had previously been distributed for three fourths of an as for each modius, but not gratis; in other words, he

attracted into the town and provided subsistence for that part of the population which was most dangerous to tranquillity. Next he procured the abolition of that law of Ælius and Fufius, by virtue of which either an augur or magistrate could suspend the deliberations of the people when they were dangerous. A third innovation, however, contained the germs of even greater disturbance than any other of the four laws which we mention here ; for its effects survived the repeal of the three others, and the consequent cessation of their operation, immediately after the close of Clodius's tribuneship.

The senate had often prohibited, and by penalties enforced its prohibition of combinations and societies for public festivals, banquets, — for effecting particular objects, common to certain trades and crafts, for elective or other purposes ; the most dangerous thing conceivable to an aristocratic state, because the existence of such associations gives free scope to agitators, and organises that opposition to constituted authorities which cannot be maintained by individuals. Clodius by a popular vote restored them. He did not stop here ; he not only restored their rights to artisans, tradesmen, sacrificial societies, superstitious and political juntas ; he not only took them under his protection against the police regulations of the senate ; but even established new associations, partly composed of the lowest rabble, slaves, and runaway peasants ; partly, however, of equestrians and respectable traders. These associations and clubs formed a state within a state, and arrogated to themselves a sort of elective jurisdiction, admission by whom conferred honour, as rejection attached ignominy.*

* “*Collegia, non ea solum quæ senatus sustulerat, restituta, sed innumera quædam nova ex omni fæce urbis ac servitio concitata ; ab eodem homine, in stupris inauditis nefariisque versato, vetus illa inagistra pudoris et modestiæ, severitas censoria sublata est.*” — *Cic. Orat. in L. Pisonem*, c. iv.

Cicero seems to refer to some such *sodalitates* or *collegia*, when he reproaches Flaccus with having been rejected. The passage is as follows : — “*Non prætermittam, ne illud quidem : M. Furium Flaccum, equitem Romanum, hominem nequam, Capitolini et Mercuriales de collegio eiecerunt præsentem, ad pedes uniuscujusque jacentem.*” — *Epist. ad Quint. Fr. trem*, lib. ii. ep. 5.

The effect of measures of this description failed not to be speedily felt.*

For Cato a public duty was found, at a distance from the capital. The reigning king of Cyprus, with whom his subjects were highly discontented, had, as it happened, not yet been recognised as the ally of Rome. His disaffected subjects appealed to the popular party there; and Clodius, who had formerly received what he considered as a personal affront from that monarch, brought forward a proposition for the extension of freedom in Cyprus, and for the mission of that steady friend of republican freedom, the younger Cato, as a liberator to these oppressed Greeks. To cut out work at a distance, for a long time, for Cato, another highly invidious commission was imposed upon him. He was deputed to restore to their country certain citizens who had been exiled from Byzantium; in other words, to enforce the law of the strongest in that city, against the vote of the majority of the citizens.

These, however, turned out to be matters of less difficulty than Clodius had hoped, and Cato had expected. Resistance to the will of Rome was, in either case, out of the question. Cato tried negotiation

The following general summary of the proceedings of this consular year is given elsewhere also by Cicero:—

“Sed ut meâ causâ jam decedam, reliquas illius anni pestes recordamini; sic enim facillime perspicietis, quantam vim omnium remediorum a magistratibus proximis respublica desiderarit; legum multitudinem, eum earum quæ latæ sunt, tum vero quæ promulgatæ fuerunt. Nam latæ sunt consulibus illis tacentibus dicam, immo vero approbantibus etiam, ut censoris notio et gravissimum iudicium sanctissimi magistratus de republica tolleretur, ut collegia non modo illa vetera contra senatus consultum restituerentur, sed ab uno gladiatore innumerabilia alia conscriberentur, ut remiscis semissibus, et trientibus quinta prope pars vectigalium tolleretur.”—*Pro Sextio*, c. xxv.

* “The operation of corporate bodies, in a city so much addicted to faction and tumult, had been the cause of frequent disorders. As persons, affecting to govern the state, endeavoured to gain the people by indulging their humour in idleness and dissipation, with games, theatrical entertainments, combats of gladiators, and the baiting of wild beasts; so the head of every corporate body, though upon a smaller scale, had his feasts, his entertainments, and shows, forming to himself a party of retainers, on occasion to be employed as his faction might require. The renewal, therefore, of such establishments,—a measure which carried to every ambitious tradesman in his stall the feelings and consequence of a Crassus, a Pompey, and a Cæsar, affecting to govern the world in their respective ways,—was greedily adopted by the town people. And Clodius took occasion, in the first ardour of such corporate meetings, to foment and to direct their zeal to his own purpose.”—*Ferguson's Roman Republic*, vol. ii. p. 421.

with the miserable monarch of Cyprus, and offered him a pension, and the priesthood of the goddess of Paphos, if he would voluntarily surrender his pretensions to royalty. The king, however, feared the worst from the intervention of Rome; and, dreading death less than the spoliation of his treasures, took poison, and left the Romans the rich heritage of his possessions. The reinstatement of the exiled Byzantians Cato also found easier work than he had anticipated: his public-spirited efforts were, therefore, exclusively directed to the ways and means of bringing back a good round sum to the public treasury; and he extracted an immense amount from the sale of the royal jewels and furniture, to be scrambled for, soon afterwards, by the lawless heads of parties in Rome.

After Cato's removal, Clodius found it easy to accomplish the banishment of Cicero, as he could cite an old law in support of the motion which he now brought forward, declaring every one guilty of a capital offence who caused a citizen to be put to death without regular trial, and without allowing an appeal to the people. Every one at once saw, and Cicero himself gave out, that this motion was aimed exclusively against him. Cæsar afforded him no protection, as, to avoid appearing his protégé, he had before refused the offer of the place of lieutenant under him; while Pompey was resolved to show the aristocratical party that they must steadily and exclusively adhere to him, to avoid wholly succumbing to the populace and their leaders.

The popular faction of Clodius was strong enough to effect the exile of Cicero to the distance of 120 Roman miles from Italy. Cicero showed, on this occasion, so little magnanimity, that Dio Cassius ridicules him, not without reason. So early as October, however (Cicero had been exiled in March), his friends made an attempt to induce the people to rescind their sentence; but could not carry through their proposition. Thenceforward, perpetual conflicts took place in the streets and on the forum. Milo, the mortal enemy of Clodius, had,

like the latter, taken a band of gladiators into his service, and armed them like soldiers. In the month of June u. c. in the following year, a new motion was brought for- 669. ward, that Cicero's recall should be insisted on by the senate. Two entire months, however, elapsed amidst the most violent movements; and it was not till Pompey declared himself unreservedly in Cicero's favour that the business was finally settled.

Cicero's return was a rich source of new commotions. He breathed nothing but rage and revenge against every one whose demeanour towards him had even been ambiguous; demanded compensation for his town-house, which Clodius had razed to the ground, and devoted its former site to religious uses,—as well as for injuries to his estates at Formiæ and Tusculum. He insisted that every transaction connected with Clodius's tribuneship (*acta Clodii*) should be struck out of the archives. This last proposal, however, was peculiarly offensive to Cato, who had been sent by the agency of Clodius to Cyprus and Byzantium, and who, therefore, if every transaction which had taken place under that tribune should be cancelled, would lose every testimonial of his active services.

While senate and people remained immersed in quarrels and disorders, Cæsar continued to advance with sure steps to his object. He established his military power throughout Gaul, and along the course of the Rhine, and gained the populace by an artful distribution of the Gallic spoils; while Pompey, by his half measures and vacillating policy, was making himself contemptible, which was worse than if he had made himself hated. However frequently Cicero showed his own weakness in courting petty honours and distinctions, he looked with a compassionate smile at Pompey's little manœuvres. Immediately on his return, it seems that Pompey employed his services to get the people to entrust him with powers wholly unprecedented, merely under the pretext that the dearth which then prevailed in Rome called for extraordinary

measures.* Cicero thereupon proposed that Pompey should be invested, during five years, with the superintendence of the supply of grain in all the provinces, with the same powers which had formerly been conferred on him in the pirate-war, and with authority to name fifteen lieutenants, &c. The consuls drew up the law, according to Cicero's proposals, and Pompey declared the measure strictly conformable to his wishes. Messius, one of his creatures, was, however, better advised of his views, and brought forward a measure of a very different nature, conferring on him powers far more extensive. Pompey was charged by this amended bill with the unlimited control of all the public treasures and revenues, provided with fleets and armies, and invested with authority in the provinces above that of the governors themselves. What hope could remain of preserving the ancient constitution, when even Cicero owns himself swayed by private considerations, to let a measure pass which he thought wholly indefensible? †

Cæsar had extended his conquests as far as the mouth of the Seine, but still required some time to secure his acquisitions. He had shaped his course towards Italy, in order to be near the capital. Just at this time, Pompey was affronted in the senate with a charge of having administered the public funds in a careless manner. Thereupon he hastened with Crassus, by way of Lucca, to meet Cæsar, who engaged to employ his influence in favour of their projects, in order that they might not oppose the extension of his own command for three or four years. How low the Roman nobility had sunk, may be inferred from the degrading concourse of senators to the triumvirs' place

* "Cum per eos dies senatus de annonâ haberetur, et ad ejus procuracionem sermone non solum pleo's, verum etiam bonorum Pompeius vocaretur, *il que ipse cuperet*, multitudo que a me nominatim ut id decernerem postularet, feci," &c. — *Attic.* l. iv. ep. 1.

† *Illa nostra lex consularis nunc modesta videtur; hæc Messii non ferenda. Pompeius illam velle se dicit, familiares hanc. Consulares, duce Favorino, fremunt. Nos tacemus; et eo magis, quod de domo nostrâ nihil adhuc pontifices responderunt.*

of conference, all eager to pay their court to these three potent personages. As Cæsar was in possession of a province and an army, his two friends aspired to be so. The first point was to reach the consulship. Both were strongly seconded in their canvass by the party of Cæsar; notwithstanding which, they had to encounter vehement opposition. For many months the elections were hindered by tumults in the city, in which Clodius and Milo figured as usual. During these months one interrex was named after another; and it was not till late in the year that Crassus and Pompey attained a second consulship. Their first exertion of power was an unblushing violation of law, for the sake of excluding Cato from the prætorship. Cato was Cæsar's mortal enemy, Vatinius his devoted friend; the consuls, therefore, pitched on the latter for prætor. But his election was impossible without buying the votes; and this expedient coming within the legal description of the *crimen ambitus*, exposed to a heavy penalty those who practised it. The consuls took the bull by the horns, and were actually shameless enough to move a resolution in the assembly of the people, which passed, that the new prætors should not be proceeded against for illegally obtaining their election: *ne qui præturam per ambitum cepisset ei propterea fraudi esset*.

u. c.
698.

It had already been agreed upon at the meeting of the sovereign trio, that Cæsar should have permission to increase his army considerably; that Crassus, after his consulship, should receive the province of Syria, and Pompey that of Spain, with adequate forces. The former, at the destined time, left Rome at the head of an army, regardless of the curse which the tribune Ateius Capito launched after him; and shortly afterwards lost life, reputation, and a splendid army, in a war with the Parthians, commenced without cause, and carried on without conduct or prudence. Meanwhile, Pompey proceeded to levy four legions, under the pretext that, as governor of Spain, where he never

set foot, he should require reinforcements to carry on the war against the Vaccai. Instead of this, he quietly went to live on his estates in the country; superintended the provisioning of the capital; administered the public treasures; and held the command of fleets and armies; while he left Spain to be governed by his deputies, and maintained such friendly relations with Cæsar, even after the death of Julia, that he detached two of his legions to the assistance of the latter, when he was threatened with a general insurrection in Gaul.

u. c. For two successive years the election of consuls was
700, impeded by tumults, and a dictatorship was talked of
701. merely to keep the peace for that occasion; an office which could, of course, devolve on no other public man than Pompey. At length, without resorting to this ultimate expedient, Domitius Calvinus and Valerius Messala were chosen consuls. The brief space of five months, during which they held their office, was filled up with incessant strife between Milo and Clodius, the former of whom was canvassing for the consulship, while the other sought the office of prætor. Pompey played a despicable part enough betwixt them. He was the friend of Clodius, and yet would not appear as the enemy of Milo, the latter being powerfully supported by the senate. The longer the canvass was protracted, the better pleased was the populace; and the disorders in the city increased daily.

Milo was, at that time, dictator in Lanuvium, and was thither bound, to nominate a high-priest, on the
701. 20th of January. Clodius, who had been holding a discourse to the magistrates in Aricia, was returning from thence; and, not far from Bovillæ, met his arch-enemy, whether accidentally or designedly on either part. Clodius was on horseback, followed by thirty armed attendants, an escort without which he never travelled. Milo was in a carriage, with his wife and a friend, accompanied by a numerous cortège, among whom were a band of gladiators. Two of Milo's people, Birria and Eudamus, well-known prize-fighters,

followed the other party, and picked a quarrel with Clodius's attendants. Clodius, turning round in a threatening manner, was stabbed in the shoulder by Birria. The fray now became general, and Clodius was carried, severely wounded, into a public house hard by; and Milo, thinking a crime consummated less dangerous than one merely inchoate, stormed his retreat, despatched him, and left his corpse exposed on the public highway, where it was found by Sextus Tedijs, a senator, on his way from his country-house, and brought to Rome in his litter.

The news of the murder excited a great ferment in the capital; and two of the tribunes, Munatius Planeus and Q. Pompeius Rufus, did their best to exasperate the people. They caused the naked corpse, which had lain in state all night in the house of Clodius, to be carried out in the forum, and exposed before the rostra, so that the wounds on it might be visible to the multitude. They next enhanced, by inflammatory harangues, the effect of the spectacle, till the infuriated crowd carried the corpse into the senate-house, made a funeral pile of the benches, scaffoldings, tables, and manuscripts (*codicibus librariorum*) which they could find in the forum and booths around, and, setting fire to it, burnt down not only the senate-house, but part of the adjoining Basilica Porcia. The houses of Lepidus (then interrex) and that of Milo were attacked. Milo himself was absent, but his people repulsed the mob with arrow-shots. The raging multitude next got hold of the consular insignia, proceeded to Pompey's gardens, and hailed him sometimes consul, sometimes dictator.

Milo had meant, at first, to go into voluntary banishment; but now that the excesses of the populace seemed to incline public opinion in his favour, he returned to the city, obtained the support of two among the tribunes, and proceeded with his canvass for the consulship. Meanwhile, one interrex was elected after another, without succeeding in holding the electoral

assemblies: the violence of the armed hordes attached to each of the candidates rendered it impossible to take the votes, and every method was tried in vain to restore the public order. The senate at length resolved that the tribunes, the interrex, and Cn. Pompeius, who was near Rome, in the station of proconsul, should, according to the formula employed in such emergencies, *take care that the republic should receive no detriment*; and Pompey was charged to levy troops throughout Italy, to suppress the disorders. He soon made his appearance at the head of an imposing force. The friends and relations of Clodius laid their charges against Milo before him, and commenced proceedings by demanding that Milo's slaves should be given up, that confessions might be obtained from them by torture. Pompey, as usual, took the course which he thought adapted to circumstances; showed himself well disposed to the Clodians; and, at length, being appointed consul, threatened the tribune Cœlius, who ventured to take Milo's part, that, if he constrained him to do so, he would defend the republic by force of arms. Pompey at first exercised the consular power without a colleague, and made regulations undoubtedly adapted to restore tranquillity, but which were directed, at the same time, distinctly and by name against Milo.*

The affair which mainly occupied the period of Pompey's sole consulship (from March to August), was Milo's trial. Cicero, who pleaded in his defence, commenced his discourse by complaining of the unaccustomed aspect of the place of trial, and the absence of free citizens and spectators, whose feelings he might affect, and whose judgment might sway that of the

* "Facto in M. Bibuli sententiam S. C. Pompeius ab interrege Ser. Sulpicio V. Cal. Mart. mense intercalario consul creatus est statimque consulatum iniit. Deinde post diem tertium de legibus novis ferendis retulit, duas ex S. C. promulgavit. Alteram de si qua nominatim eadem in Appia via factam, et incendium curiæ, et domum M. Lepidi interregis oppugnatam comprehendit. Alteram de ambitu; pœnam graviozem et formam judiciorum breviorẽ. Utraque enim lex prius testes dari per triduum, deinde uno die atque eodem et ab accusatore perorari jubebat et ab reo, ita ut duæ horæ accusatori, tres reo darentur."—*Asc. Peditanus.*

judges themselves.* The shops were shut, whole cohorts drawn up on all sides of the forum, and Pompey sat in the midst of his staff, surrounded by picked troops. The stillness of death reigned in the forum, only interrupted by an occasional yell of impatience from the Clodians, who were well aware that the show of force was not intended against *them*. "Every where," Cicero exclaims, "I behold arms, cohorts, centurions; and did I not confide in Pompey, as in a wise and just man, I should not venture to speak." In effect, he spoke badly; and, when it was too late, committed to writing the oration which he meant and ought to have spoken. Cicero, ashamed that want of courage on his own part should have crippled the exertion of his eloquence in behalf of his friend, bought Milo's estates when they were exposed to public sale; no one bidding against him, as it was known his object was to restore them. It appears, however, from Cicero's letters, that he only reaped from this act of friendship innumerable annoyances in Rome, and even from Milo himself.

Since the death of his wife Julia, Pompey had entered into a second marriage with a daughter of Metellus Scipio; far too young a wife for him. What was worse, he allowed himself to be guided by his father-in-law, a stupid superannuated aristocrat, whom he now took as colleague in his consulship. His new consort combined with the most amiable natural qualities all the refined accomplishments of her times, and completely regained her husband to the senatorial interest. At this period Pompey enjoyed almost unlimited power in Rome; his governorship of Africa and Spain was extended by five years; he gave orders to the generals of the commonwealth, and administered yearly enormous sums, directly or indirectly drawn from the public treasures.

The Gallic insurrections, and the withdrawal of the

* "Hæc novi judicii nova forma terret oculos, qui, quocunque inciderunt, veterem consuetudinem fori et pristinum morem judiciorum requirunt; non enim corona consessus vester cinctus est, ut solebat; non usitata frequentia stipati sumus."—*Pro T. Annio Milone*, c. i.

legions detached by Pompey to aid in their suppression, afforded Cæsar very plausible pretexts for augmenting his forces. He now waited only for a pretext to cut with his sword the knot of domestic politics; while senate, consuls, and censors appeared emulous in hastening by their measures the approach of a contest for the conduct of which they had neither made, nor
 v. c. were making, any provision. In the present year, one
 704. of the consuls was Cæsar's bitter enemy; on whose motion it was now proposed to recal a vote in favour of Cæsar, which had been carried by Pompey himself, as consul, with the sanction of all the tribunes, and pursuant to which Cæsar was permitted, without disbanding his army, to come into the city, and to stand for the consulship. Pompey would take no part in these hostile demonstrations, while yet he was well known to be at the bottom of them all; so that even his friends could not but compassionate the weak politician, who levelled such half measures as these at so resolute an antagonist. Of the censors, one was Piso, Cæsar's father-in-law; the other, Appius Claudius, a man whose earlier life did not exactly seem to warrant any extraordinary rigour towards others. This very man, however, prompted by blind animosity towards Cæsar, thought proper to expel from the senate a number of his partisans, amongst others Sallust, the historian, and offered affronts to men of equestrian rank, or otherwise highly respectable; all which measures were very effective in swelling Cæsar's party.* He himself contemplated all extremities with an equal eye, and endeavoured to gain over the tribune Curio, who had loaded himself with enormous debts to please the people with games and presents. Curio, who had figured just before as Cæsar's hottest opponent, sold himself at a high rate, but repaid his price by essential

* Cœlius (*Cic. Epist. ad Div.* lib. viii. ep. 14.) very justly derides Appius Claudius's rage of reformation:—"Scis Appium censorem hic ostenta facere? de signis et tabulis, de agri modo, de ære alieno acerrime agere? Persuasum est ei censuram lomentum aut nitrum esse; errare mihi videtur. Nam sordes eluere vult; venas sibi omnes et viscera aperit."

services ; and Cæsar waited quietly till the imprudence of the opposite party should afford a decent pretence for adopting military measures.

Unfortunately, Cicero, at this conjuncture, was absent as governor of Cilicia ; otherwise his influence might possibly have prevented an open and final rupture for some time longer. As a councillor in war, he afterwards proved himself to be good for nothing ; and followed Pompey to no end but to satirise his conduct. The strife of parties already threatened to terminate in direct hostilities. It was demanded of Cæsar, that, before he stood for the consulship, he should disband his army ; while the same thing was not required of Pompey, though the senate, by a considerable majority, declared it most expedient that both should resign their command of the troops. Cæsar had quartered himself at Ravenna, and from thence despatched a letter to Rome by Curio, in which he offered to give up his army, if Pompey would do the like. For this letter his friends could hardly get a reading in the senate ; and the consul and the father-in-law of Pompey declared themselves in terms so explicit, that the senatorial *centre* (to use the language of French modern politics), indisposed as it was to give itself wholly either to Cæsar or Pompey, saw that aid was not to be hoped for from the latter, save at the price of acquiescence in the most extreme measures, which it gave, as the less perilous alternative. In vain M. Marcellus, who was no friend of Cæsar, endeavoured to dissuade the senate from taking any decisive steps, till a general levy of troops had been made, and an army set on foot. With no better success it was moved by Calidius and Rufus that Pompey should depart to his province, in order that his rival might have no pretence for commencing hostilities. The consul would not even take the votes in the latter of these motions ; and silence was imposed on every one who was not desirous to pass for a traitor. It was resolved that, before a certain day, Cæsar should disband his army, on pain of being declared a public

enemy.* In complaisance towards Pompey, who was close to the city, a meeting of the senate was held outside the walls; and his vote was given, with that of the other senators, for the above proceedings. Every thing was precipitated; a formula was made use of, which had hitherto been only employed in case of the last emergency. *Dent operam consules, prætores, tribuni plebis, quique consulares sunt ad urbem, ne quid republica detrimenti capiat.* These resolutions passed early in January; but Antonius and Cassius interposed their veto as tribunes. They received a hint from the consul to absent themselves, lest worse should betide them. It was forgotten that no decree of the senate could be valid, while attended by the violation of a right which even Sylla had left to the tribunes.† The tribunes eagerly seized the pretext for taking flight to Ravenna, and summoned Cæsar, in the name of the people, to support the constitution.

Now, at length, appeared the grand difference in the respective composition of the parties. In the one, every design and resolution were subject to interminable cavil and criticism — the wisest counsels often rejected, or carried into execution, at best, very tardily; Pompey obliged to select his officers, military and civil, according to their rank, not their capacity; and no sufficient preparations made for the contest. On the other side, Cæsar judged and acted for himself solely: every measure was taken for striking a blow which should be decisive; and no necessity, as in the opposite party, existed to extort money, munitions, and soldiers from people who took but little interest in the quarrel. Pompey made levies, allotted commands, imposed a column-tax, a door-tax, a poll-tax; put in requisition soldiers, sailors, stores, arms, carriages, nay, even military engines, from every one who had them, and collected

* The terms of the decree were somewhat gentler:—"Ni ante certam diem dimitteret exercitum, eum contra rempublicam facturum videm." When the two tribunes *interceded* against it, the senate declared, *eos contra rempublicam fecisse.*

† Jus intercedendi.

all contributions by force. Cicero, from whose letters to Atticus we learn the state of things day by day, feels perfectly well that the measures of his party are all thoroughly worthless ; that there was not a single man of resolute character amongst them ; and that Pompey himself cared less about the republic than about the preservation of his power and influence, which Cicero calls a Syllan military tyranny.

Cæsar had come only with one legion to Ravenna ; but a considerable number of cohorts followed him by forced marches. On the intelligence of his approach to Rome, of his favourable reception everywhere, of the dispersion of five cohorts in Iguvium (Gubbio), the whole senate, the consuls, and other functionaries, in short, all the adherents of Pompey, fled from Rome to Capua. Indecision and discouragement prevailed ; the new levies had melted away, or had not yet assembled ; and Pompey could not place any reliance on the two legions which he had formerly lent to Cæsar, and which now served under his own orders. Domitius was, therefore, instructed to make a demonstration against Cæsar with five and twenty cohorts, and then to fall back step by step. The official correspondence between Pompey and Domitius clearly shows the defect of unity in all the measures of Cæsar's opponents, and how little Pompey's commands were obeyed by his aristocratic officers. Domitius, by his neglect of Pompey's orders, gave the enemy time to shut him up in Corfinium ; was made prisoner by his own troops, and delivered up to Cæsar ; while his cohorts, in a mass, deserted to the enemy.

This incident spread such consternation amongst Pompey's followers, that a hasty resolution was taken to abandon Italy altogether, and cross over to Greece. The naval force of the commonwealth, the whole East, Africa, and Spain, were at the command of Pompey ; it was therefore held that Italy might be easily recovered, when attacked at once by his forces from the Pyrenees and the Mediterranean. This had also oc-

curred to Cæsar ; who therefore, after vainly attempting to overtake and crush his rival before he could put to sea from Bruundusium, directed his first efforts against Spain, in order to have the western half of the empire in entire subjection before he turned his arms on the East.

Sardinia and Sicily could not be maintained after Italy had been lost by the party of Pompey : but Attius Varus kept possession of Africa, by keeping every partisan of Cæsar out of the country. While Cæsar was employed in the regulation of the capital, and in appropriating the public treasures left behind in his haste by Pompey, his soldiers were now quartered throughout the towns of Italy ; but had hardly snatched an interval of necessary repose, when Cæsar proceeded across the Alps to invade his rival's province of Spain, where Afranius and Petreius had seven or eight legions under their orders. The lenity and respect for established forms displayed by Cæsar, the forbearance which he evinced even towards those who, like the tribune Metellus, were wild enough to dream of opposition to any thing he thought fit to do, were fruits of a deeply calculated policy. He could show rigour enough when it served his purpose better than lenity.

Marseilles, the oldest and truest ally of Rome, wished to remain neutral pending the decision of the contest : Cæsar had, however, occasion for gold, vessels, and harbours, and scrupled not a moment to lay siege to the town, which was maintained against him during the whole of his long and severe warfare with Afranius and Petreius in Spain, and was not taken till after the dispersion or capture of their legions. The treatment of the town, when at length taken, was so merciless, that from thenceforwards, by Strabo's account, it only preserved vestiges of its former prosperity and opulence.*

U. C.
702.

It appears to have been not without hesitation that Cæsar, on his return to Rome, assumed the dictatorship ; a step which revived ominous reminiscences of Sylla, who

* Strab. Geograph. lib. iv.

was the first in whose hands that office became an unlimited monarchical power. As the very name of dictator was now odious, Cæsar resigned as soon as he could a title which he required at the moment to give a colour of law to his proceedings, to warrant him in remaining at the head of the army until he was elected consul, and in making such regulations as the circumstances seemed to demand. It is remarkable that the month in which Cæsar entered upon his consulship, and which, in that year, stood for the month of January, owing to the imperfect state of the Roman calendar, fell in October. It appears, then, that the space between the spring months and September sufficed Cæsar to gain possession of all Italy, Sicily, and Sardinia, drive Pompey to Greece, reduce Marseilles, overthrow Petreius and Afranius, subjugate Spain, regulate matters in Rome, despatch Curio to Africa with an army, and collect his force for a further expedition.

The enemy were less expeditious, though they too gained some advantages. They drove Dolabella from Dalmatia, which he was occupying for Cæsar, and blockaded in an island and took prisoner Antony's brother, who came up to his aid. In this way Pompey maintained his naval superiority. By land, Cæsar encamped before the republican army at Dyrrachium, and endeavoured to surround it. On this occasion, Pompey showed the experience of a veteran leader ; he met stratagem with stratagem, and at length compelled Cæsar to adopt another plan of operations. He not only showed himself equal to the enemy in the choice and in the change of his positions, but gave him battle six times, mostly with advantage, close to his own lines of fortification ; and once might have entirely routed him, had he possessed resolution sufficient to follow up his victory on the instant. Cæsar thought it no longer advisable to stay on the coast : he withdrew himself from the enemy by quick and skilful marches, and directed his march to Thessaly by a difficult route over the mountains. It appeared inconceivable, as Dio Cassius remarks, that

Cæsar, who, at that moment, was in possession of a fleet of 500 sail, instead of crossing at once over to Italy, should have run after the enemy into Thessaly. The two armies encamped in front of each other in the plain of Pharsalus. Pompey would willingly have avoided an engagement: his policy was obviously delay; while Cæsar was placed under the necessity of seizing the first opportunity for trying a decisive issue. But Pompey, surrounded by 200 senators, could not act on his own views; and was compelled to hazard an action merely to satisfy the clamour of the noble lords impatient to be in Rome. The result of this feeble and false policy was the overthrow of the Roman constitution; the substance of which did not survive the battle of Pharsalia, though its shadow reappeared from time to time. Pompey must have been marked for destruction by destiny even before the action, or he could not have dreamed of opposing the raw levies of the capital and undisciplined recruits from the country to Cæsar's veteran legions, who had hardened under his own eye, and whom he had informed as with one spirit.* Moreover, Pompey completely lost his brains in the first brunt of the battle; and, if Cæsar's account of the number of fallen on either side is at all to be trusted, seldom has a decisive field been won so easily.† This is the more remarkable, as, immediately after the battle, the victorious general stormed the enemy's camp, and added in his narrative the number of those who fell in that service to the loss which was, strictly speaking, incurred in the action.

* "Ex eo tempore," says Cicero of Pompey, "vir ille summus nullus imperator fuit. Signa tirone et collectitio exercitu cum legionibus robustissimus contulit; victus turpissime, amissis etiam castris, solus fugit."

† By Cæsar's account, he lost only 200 soldiers in this action. He lost, however, thirty brave centurions. Of the enemy, he says, 15,000 appear to have fallen. So startling a fact is prudently left doubtful.

CHAP. II.

FROM THE BATTLE OF PHARSALIA TO THE BATTLE OF ACTIUM.

POMPEY does not seem to have recovered the use of his faculties immediately after the action, or he would probably have betaken himself to his fleet, which still kept the seas ; or would have gone over to Africa, where his own generals, and his ally, Juba, the king of Mauritania, had brought together very considerable forces. Cæsar had sent his *dearly bought* friend, Curio, to Sicily, with four legions, on learning that Cato had slipped through the fingers of Asinius Pollio, whom he had sent thither. Curio hence proceeded with two legions into Africa, where, at first, he gained some trifling advantages over Attius Varus ; which, trifling as they were in themselves, sufficed to lull him in fatal security. He allowed himself to be tricked into the desert by a stratagem of the Moorish king Juba, who made as if he were suddenly recalled into his own country, but unexpectedly turned upon Curio's army, sinking under thirst and heat in the desert, and completely cut it to pieces.

The confusion was so great in Pompey's councils, after the decisive day of Pharsalia, that his friends, who were leagued with Juba, and were actually triumphant, had no advices even of the fate of the action, till the arrival of those fugitives in Africa, who either could not hope for Cæsar's mercy, or disdained to sue for it. Pompey himself turned his course towards Asia ; precisely the quarter where his friends had conducted themselves in such a manner, that nobody could well be expected to hazard fortune or life in his service. His father-in-law, Marcellus Scipio, had formerly tyrannised over Asia : all the native princes were involved deeply in debt to Pompey ; and, consequently, any means could

not but be welcome to them for shaking themselves free from the obligation. Cæsar was well acquainted with the posture of affairs in that quarter; he therefore pursued Pompey in person, persuaded that the latter would find no refuge amongst his shrewd Asiatic and Greek friends. Even Pompey felt it expedient not to approach Asia Minor, where Scipio had practised every species of oppression; in Rhodes his friends could find no admission; in Antioch a public decree had been issued to prohibit, on pain of death, the entrance of any friend of Pompey into the city. Under these circumstances, Pompey took the unfortunate resolution of directing his flight towards Egypt.

Cæsar well perceived that his conflict with the wretched aristocracy, with which he had been, in fact, engaged rather than with Pompey, was at an end the moment he should either have taken or slain the latter*; he therefore only staid in Pharsalia two days after the action, and hastened from thence to the Hellespont. He took with him, at first, only a single legion; afterwards a second, which he caused Fufius to bring up from Achaia; and 800 knights, with 15 or 20 vessels. He had little fear, however, of the remains of Pompey's fleet, consisting, for the most part, of Egyptian, Phœnician, Cyprian, Cyrenaic, and Greek ships, which, after the defeat of their leader, returned to their respective homes.

Ptolemy Auletes, the late monarch of that kingdom, had left it to his eldest son, and daughter, Cleopatra, on condition of their marrying each other, agreeably to the vile use of the royal race of Egypt. The prince, who was only thirteen years of age, was under the tutelage of three of those sly and subtle politicians who swarmed in the learned court of Alexandria—people who studied

* Cæsar himself assigns the following ground for his pursuit of Pompey:—“Cæsar, omnibus rebus relictis, persequendum sibi Pompeium existimavit, quascunque in partes se ex fuga recepisset, ne rursus copias comparare alias et bellum renovare posset, et quantumcumque itineris equitatu efficere poterat, quotidie progrediebatur, legionemque unam minoribus itineribus subsequi jussit.”—*De Bello Civ.* lib. iii. c. 102.

to use for their own ends all the attainments of science, and all the arts of refinement, and were not unfrequently caught in the webs spun by their own cunning. Theodotus, the chamberlain of the young king, who was also his tutor, a learned, adroit, and penetrating character; Achilles, who stood at the head of the troops; and Potheinus, of the treasury—however at variance with each other, as such people are wont to be—were nevertheless, whenever their joint interest was concerned, firmly united against any honest man who might appear by miracle; and equally so whenever reasons of state suggested a bad action. They had, shortly before, excluded the queen's sister from all share in the government, and forced her to take refuge in Syria, where she drew together some forces, for the purpose of recovering the guardianship of her brother, whom her father's will had destined her husband. The three usurping ministers despatched an army against her. The two sides were encamped in each other's presence, near Pelusium, when Pompey's flight conducted him to that place, where he threw himself on the doubtful hospitality of the Egyptian ministers. According to the maxims of Oriental and Greek policy, no better proof of amity can be given to a conqueror who aims at the ascent of a throne, than to clear his path of all whose existence thwarts his elevation. The crafty Egyptian rulers, whose position, indeed, was critical, placed, as they were, between two fires, acted on this policy.

The murder of Pompey, directed by the guardians of the Egyptian monarch, has been poetically described by Lucan and Plutarch, each in his own manner, without incurring the charge of having exaggerated its tragic features. It remains doubtful whether Cæsar even wished his feeble antagonist to be put out of the way when he was out of condition to do mischief. But, even had he wished his removal, he took pains to show that he had not wished it by means of assassination. Cæsar had no sooner arrived in Egypt, than he has-

tened to prove to the ministers that they had misunderstood his character in their excess of cunning. All the authors of his rival's murder, during his stay in Alexandria, met with their deserved fate; excepting the learned and worthless sophist, Theodotus, on whom condign punishment was afterwards inflicted by Casius.

Cleopatra, then in the bloom of youth and beauty, completely won the conqueror, on his first arrival in Alexandria, by those blandishments which were afterwards no less triumphant over Antony.* The ministers of the young monarch, who vainly had hoped to buy Cæsar's good-will by enacting an unbidden atrocity, had now no other alternative but to sink without a struggle, or to seize the moment to crush him before his army should come up. As, however, Cæsar had got the young king into his hands, the infant princess Arsinoe was placed at the head of the hostile faction; and Cæsar was shut up and besieged in the quarter of Alexandria in which he had selected his quarters. Before it had come to open war, a large part of the Egyptian army had been covertly drawn from Pelusium to Alexandria; and a plot had been laid to despatch the Roman general, by the tried and approved mode of assassination. This design, however, was detected, and Potheinus put to death by Cæsar's orders. Achilles fled to the army; and at its head, backed by the malcontent Alexandrians, fell on the little band of Romans, whom the lateness of the season, and the prevalent contrary winds at sea, deprived of any hope of reinforcement. Of the one and twenty months during which Cæsar was absent from Rome, the war with Pompey only filled up the space between July and October; while the so-called Alexandrian war so sharply engaged him for nine months, that his correspondence with Rome during that period ceased almost entirely. At length he succeeded in drawing legions to his relief from Bithynia; overthrew the Egyptian

* Plut. Cæs. c. 49.

army, and stormed their encampment on the Nile. The rout was complete; and the enemy fled to their ships in such disorder, that the king himself lost his life in the *mêlée*. After his death, Cæsar, pleading the wish of his predecessor, administered Egypt wholly at his own discretion. Cleopatra was named regent on condition of wedding her younger brother: the conqueror took Arsinoë with him out of the kingdom.*

During this interregnum, in which no despatches, advices, or orders from Cæsar reached the capital, the most horrible state of confusion prevailed there, and throughout Italy. Rome required a military ruler; and Cæsar named as his lieutenant during his absence M. Antonius, who had commanded a wing of his army in the battle of Pharsalia. Abandoned, brutal, overwhelmed in debts and debaucheries, Antony, who was confessedly endowed with great abilities, was still more conspicuous by his vices. All Italy was revolted by his ostentatious indecencies, extravagant banquets, and utter neglect of affairs. In the mean time Dolabella, who was also Cæsar's devoted satellite, as tribune, kept the people in commotion. He proposed the most revolutionary laws during his tribuneship; such as the compulsory diminution of house-rent, and remission of debts. The senate, however implicitly devoted to Cæsar, resisted his measures, and required that no innovations whatever should be attempted till Cæsar's return. Trebellius, who was also tribune, resisted his colleague by actual force. Blood flowed in the streets of Rome, as in former times of infuriate faction: many hundred citizens lost their lives in the frequent conflicts which arose at assemblies of the citizens; and though Antony marched troops into the city, and adopted a decisive tone of control, his aim was assuredly rather

* "Ægypto atque Alexandria potitus, reges constituit quos Ptolemæus testamento scripserat atque obtestatus erat populum Romanum, ne mutarentur. Nam majore ex duobus pueris rege amisso, minori transdidit regnum, majorique ex duabus filiis, Cleopatraræ, quæ manserat in fide præsidisque ejus; minorem Arsinoem, cujus nomine diu regnasse impotenter Ganymedem docuimus, deducere ex regno statuit."—*De Bello Alexandrino*, c. 33.

to augment than allay the public disorders. Cæsar could not but see the urgent necessity for his return to Rome ; but deemed it not less necessary to show himself in Asia the absolute disposer of the powers of the Roman commonwealth, the distributor of empires and of sovereignties, as Pompey had been after his Mithridatic triumphs. These ends he accomplished with extraordinary celerity.

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On his return to the metropolis in December, Cæsar found the senate—that is to say, such of its members as had all along been his friends, or had more recently become such—ready to do or to suffer whatever he should demand or should impose upon them. Crowns, statues, privileges, the prerogative of peace and war, every thing he desired, in short, and many things that he did not desire, were granted him by the mean-spirited senate ; and he had nothing left to do but to collect treasures, and promote his friends to offices of honour. In this state of things, he could lay down the dictatorship without danger, and content himself for the following year with the consulship. Antony, too, was forced to give up his extraordinary powers, which, indeed, ceased of themselves with the dictatorship ; and Cæsar hastened to Africa, where Scipio and Cato kept on foot a Roman, Juba an African, force ; while the two sons of Pompey made attempts to collect a fleet, and the adherents of the Pompeian party in Spain regained their ascendancy. In Africa, the army of the enemy was considerably superior in numerical force to that of Cæsar ; but generals such as Scipio, Labientus, Afranius, and others, were wholly devoid of talents for command, however valuable their services in subordinate situations. Thus they allowed Cæsar to take a position which left them no alternative than either to abandon Thapsus, in which they had placed a strong garrison, or to hazard a decisive engagement. They chose the latter, and not only lost the day, as at Pharsalia, but lost their camp, and with it every chance of maintaining further resistance.

Whether Cato could have saved the aristocratical cause by assuming the command in chief, which he would not do, as not being of consular rank, is extremely doubtful; and, perhaps, it is well for his fame that it was not put to the proof. For himself, he first awaited the last extremities, and then followed the stoic maxim of dying as he had lived, which sanctified to the purest minds of antiquity the act of suicide. How infinitely superior was this man to the times in which he lived, may best be judged by comparing his composed inflexibility in defending the established forms of the Roman constitution, with Cicero's court morality, his personal anxieties, and the creeping arts which, according to his own confession, he looked upon as called for by the circumstances. Cicero's fears were especially excited by the rigours which Cæsar held it necessary to exercise in Africa, and which seemed so inconsistent with his ordinary mildness; while, in fact, they sprung from exactly the same deliberate system of policy. He not only caused the soldiers taken prisoners in the action to be cut to pieces under his eyes, but doomed to the same fate Faustus Sylla, for the sake of his wealth, Q. Cæsar, and other captives of superior rank. He spared, however, the poor citizens of Utica, who had ever been true to him; but 300 wealthy Roman merchants, who were resident there, were forced to pay heavy fines, and might well be glad to get off so cheaply. Juba's kingdom was swept away entirely; and various towns were visited with heavy contributions.

Every step of Cæsar now exhibited the firm assurance of his own superiority of energy and spirit, and exclusive destination for the attributes of sovereignty. This was confirmed by the overstrained and almost ludicrous marks of distinction which the senate and people forced upon him immediately after the war in Africa. During four months' stay in Rome, he planned improvements and embellishments which do him not less honour than his fortunate campaigns, amongst

which may be noticed especially his reform of the Roman calendar.

The struggle with the opposite party seemed already ended, and Cæsar's domination secured, when a new contest arose in Spain more perilous than any former one. Many towns in the south of Spain, during the African war, had received garrisons detached from the Pompeian forces in Africa; and legions which had mutinied against their officers took that side, to escape the punishment due to their offence. At the head of this insurrectionary force were the sons of Pompey: the bravest officers and the best soldiers of the army, dispersed by the battle of Thapsus, had turned their course towards Spain; and Cæsar saw that his personal presence was absolutely necessary. He tore himself, accordingly, from the arms of his Cleopatra, who was living at Rome in his own house with her nominal husband, her younger brother, and, at his bidding, had been received into the friendship and alliance of Rome.

Cæsar's fortune followed him to Spain. He came in presence of the enemy at Munda, where a sharp conflict awaited him with the flower of the Spanish nation, and the best soldiers of Rome, who could have no hope but in desperate measures. His first onset was repulsed; and, in spite of all his subsequent efforts, the field might have been finally lost, had not the enemy abandoned their order of battle to save their baggage, which attracted the cupidity of the Numidian and Mauritanian mercenaries in Cæsar's service. Cnæus, one of Pompey's sons, was caught and slain in his flight; the other, Sextus, reappeared, immediately after Cæsar's death, at the head of a considerable force by sea and

robbed of their demesne-lands and charged with extraordinary imposts.

From henceforwards the character of Cæsar seemed to suffer a change. Like Alexander and Napoleon, he had not strength sufficient to sustain the highest favours of destiny. He now caught at the show of monarchy, whereas he had formerly grasped its substance, and launched into wild impracticable schemes of ostentation or empire, encouraged by the slavish Romans, who rushed half-way to meet tyranny. Amongst his gigantic undertakings was the extension of the city, and especially its outskirts (*pomoerium*). Under the same rubric must be noted his preparations for a war with the Parthians, which was at once to be an expedition of conquest and discovery. He had avoided as yet any glaring triumph over the republicans; he had made as if his object was to preserve the essential forms of the commonwealth, assuming only a temporary authority to remove abuses, but otherwise letting things go on in their ordinary routine. But now he seemed of another mind; and, according to Plutarch, the triumph which he held for his late success against Romans was viewed as a public humiliation. The assumption of a life-dictatorship, the wreath which he wore around his head, and the military escort which attended him, although he had declined the formal offer of a body-guard, all indicated something like pretensions to royalty.* He even found matter of pride in blazoning his descent from Venus, and from the ancient kings of Alba Longa, on his seal. The forms for which he had hitherto shown some respect he now spurned at; and, in order to degrade republican dignities into courtly distinctions, he appointed forty quæstors, sixteen prætors, six ædiles, and took into the senate all kinds of people,

* Cicero (*Epist. ad Attic.* lib. xiii. ep. 52.) says that Cæsar had proposed to visit him, which had occasioned him extreme uneasiness; for that the evening before he had visited Philippus, whose country-house had been filled with soldiers to such a degree, that even the banquetting-room, where Cæsar was to eat, had not remained vacant. *Quippe hominum duo millia; sane sum commotus, quid postridie fieret, ac mihi Barba Cassius subvenit; custodes dedit.*

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without wealth or station ; whereby he swelled the numbers of that body to nine hundred. Many of them he distinguished above the rest by empty honours ; that is to say, converted, as in modern times, the names of public offices into mere titles. People who had never been installed in any seat of authority he dubbed prætors, consulars, ex-censors, and proconsulars. He pushed to a degree of ridicule the fashion afterwards prevalent under the emperors of treating the consulship as a mere decoration or order, as appears from the following example. The consul Fabius Maximus died on the last day of the year, and Cæsar appointed Caninius Rebilus consul for the rest of the day. Cicero, who saw the rush of congratulation on this appointment, shrewdly remarked, that people must make haste, lest the good man should have ceased to be consul before their congratulations reached him.*

Cæsar's mighty projects have, perhaps, been exaggerated by Plutarch ; they appear, however, to indicate that he aimed, like the later emperors, to found an elective military despotism. He planned roads across the Apennines ; designed to build a theatre, exceeding in size that of Pompey ; and to found magnificent libraries. "He intended," says Plutarch, "to march against the Parthians ; and, when he had conquered those, to penetrate through Hyrcania by the Caspian, across the range of the Caucasus, to the Euxine, and from thence to the regions of Scythia. He would next attack the territories bordering on Germany, and invade the centre of Germany itself ; return again through the lands of the Celt to Italy ; and in this way complete the circle of conquests, which, on every side, should be only closed by the ocean. During the course of these campaigns, the Isthmus of Corinth was to be cut through ; the Tiber and Anio joined to the sea by a

* Cicero made another jest, but in bitterness of feeling, on this consulship :—"Ita Caninio consule scito neminem prandisse. Nihil tamen eo consule mali factum est, fuit enim mirifica vigilantia, qui suo toto consulatu somnum non viderit. Hæc tibi ridicula videntur, non enim ades ; quæ si videres, lacrymas non teneres."—*Epist. ad Divers. lib. ii. ep. 30.*

canal near Terracina, that vessels might reach Rome with greater ease and safety. Moreover, the marshes near Pometia and Setia were to be drained, and vast tracts of land thereby reclaimed to cultivation. At Ostia immense piers were to be built, and basins excavated.

These gigantic projects, befitting an Eastern despot, or ruler of castes, combined with his obvious hankering to revive the royal dignity, awakened, even amongst his friends, the spirit of patriotism, the love of freedom, and the remains of republican pride, which, though it had perished from the souls of the multitude, concentrated itself all the more strongly in those of a small part of the aristocracy. As in all eras of high civilisation and corruption, the mental cultivation and force of a small minority rose the higher, the deeper the degeneracy of the rest of the community. That the flower of the Roman nobility, the sixty eminent personages who leagued themselves against Cæsar, should have dreamed of thus asserting freedom, which had ceased to exist since the days of the Gracchi, is the more to be regretted, as their enterprise afforded occasion to annihilate at a single blow, by the destruction of this little band, whatever remnants of Roman magnanimity had been preserved among the people in these lamentable times.

Both the prætors of the year, Brutus and Cassius, were amongst the conspirators. Antony's imprudence in repeatedly pressing upon Cæsar the diadem and the title of king, though the popular voice was so loud against it that Cæsar thought it impolitic to seize the prize which he aimed at, must certainly have hastened the catastrophe; the results of which might probably have been less fatal than they were for the moment, could the conspirators have resolved to despatch Antony at the same time. First among the conspirators ranked Brutus and Cassius, not merely as prætors, but with reference to their talents, to their patriotism, and singleness of purpose; and though one followed the doctrines of Zeno, the other of Epicurus, each was equally ca-

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pable of daring and suffering all extremities. Besides the Pompeians, the following friends of Cæsar were among the conspirators—Decimus Brutus, C. Casca, P. Servilius Casca, Trebonius, Tullius Cimber, Minutius Basillus. The senate itself was selected by the conspirators as the scene of the murder. Foremost among Romans, they were resolved to prove to their fellow-citizens that theirs was no deed of assassination done in a corner, but the extraordinary punishment of a public malefactor, who could not be brought to account by any ordinary means, as he held the state and its tribunals captive by his creatures and soldiery.

As the senate was composed of Cæsar's instruments, while the populace expected from a monarchical regimen licentious indulgences, public shows, and gratuities, the mode of his death diffused a very general consternation: the call to freedom was received with indifference by the people; and it was out of the question to think of passing a formal declaration, that Cæsar had assumed illegal powers, that his property fell to the state, and that his body should be thrown into the Tiber. Indeed, the prætors and their friends were obliged to take post in the capitol, in order to secure themselves against a burst of popular fury. The Jews in Rome were prompted by their vindictive recollections of Pompey, who had conquered their country, and penetrated into their temple, without, however, plundering it, to show especial honour to the memory of Cæsar.* The populace, excited by Antony's speech at Cæsar's funeral, and by the pretended bequest of his gardens for public walks, and of 300 sesterces to every citizen of Rome, which Antony alleged to have been made in the will of the late dictator, threatened to burn the houses of the conspirators. Confusion reached its acme, when Lepidus moved into the city the troops which had been stationed in the island in the Tiber, and declared himself ready to support Antony at their head. The con-

* Suetonius (*Cæs.* cap. lxxxiv.) says: "Præcipueque Judæi, qui etiam noctibus continuis bustum frequentarunt."

spirators, on the other hand, formed a sort of regular force out of the numerous body of gladiators which Brutus had collected and put in training for the ensuing games. The city was in a state of total anarchy.

It was now Cicero's turn to make a figure. He was not a man who could have been invited to participate in any scheme involving chances of actual personal hazard. Now, however, a new career was opened to his oratory. He appeared in the senate, which Antony assembled near his own house, in the temple of Tellus, to be safe, as he said, from the gladiators of the conspirators. Cicero enforced pacific councils, in accordance with which an amnesty was proclaimed; Antony's son delivered to the conspirators as a pledge of peace; and arrangements made for distributing the governments of the provinces. Meanwhile Antony travelled about, intrigued with Cæsar's veterans, and drew so many soldiers round the capital, that the prætors and their friends thought themselves no longer in safety. They soon came to declarations and counter-declarations with Antony; and at length demanded formally to be sanctioned in remaining out of the city without ceasing to be prætors. At last, on their reiterated demand for some distinct declaration on what terms Antony would stand with them, he sent a coarse and contemptuous reply in an open letter.*

War now seemed declared between the parties; Cicero was absent, and Antony domineered in Rome at his pleasure. He extorted from the senate a decree that all regulations of Cæsar, whether issued during his life, or left amongst his posthumous relics, should have the force of law; and, on the strength of this decree, made what regulations he chose; giving out that they had been found amongst Cæsar's papers. Through his in-

* Cicero alludes to this as follows (*Epist. ad Divers.* lib. xi. ep. 3.):—
“Litteras tuas legimus, simillimas edicti tui, contumeliosas, minaces, minime dignas, quæ a te nobis mitterentur. Nos, Antoni, te nullâ lacessivimus injuriâ; neque miraturum credidimus, si prætores et eâ dignitate homines aliquid edicto postulassemus a consule. Quod si indignaris, ausos esse id facere, concede nobis, ut doleamus, ne hoc quidem abs te Bruto et Cassio tribui.”

fluence over Cæsar's widow, Calpurnia, who had consoled herself in his company for her late lord's infidelities, he had contrived to secure the whole of Cæsar's papers and correspondence, as well as the large sums which he had deposited in the temple of Ops, and which were his private property, the fruit of Pompeian confiscations. He also employed the hand of Cæsar's secretary in fabricating instruments in the name of the late dictator.

Antony was now all in all : one of his brothers was prætor, another tribune, himself consul — what could withstand him ? He caused to be conferred on the Sicilians, collectively, the right of Roman citizenship ; passed an agrarian law for dividing the public lands throughout Italy to veteran soldiers and poor citizens ; and procured his creatures provinces for four, or even for six, years. Thus confident of having gained the people and the soldiery, he sought at length to legalise the use of force and of weapons in the popular assemblies, and in the senate ; and obtained a law, that when any one was convicted of armed revolt (*de vi*), he should be permitted an appeal to the people. In order to make the courts of justice military tribunals, he mixed subaltern officers of the legions among the judges.

About this time Cicero reappeared in the senate ; and Octavius, Cæsar's grand-nephew, and his heir *ex dodrante*, i. e. to three fourths of his property, whom he had adopted, and who was not yet full eighteen, entered the lists against Antony ; gained over a part of the soldiery ; demanded his inheritance ; and especially complained of the removal of the money which was deposited in the temple of Ops, and which, in point of fact, legally belonged to him. Antony at first treated the youth's pretensions with great indifference ; but when he found them supported by the senate, and soon afterwards saw him at the head of a rapidly levied army, he too quitted Rome, and recalled four legions from Macedonia into Italy.

The struggle which took place between the consul and the young man who called himself the heir and the avenger of Cæsar, but was, in fact, the instrument of all whose secret wishes pointed towards monarchy, again gave some degree of weight to the senate; and Cicero brought his eloquence again into action without delay. He had received some affront from Antony as consul; and did not fail to give sufficiently bitter marks of resentment. Antony answered this first attack by a harsh and irritating speech; and Cicero's reply was the renowned second philippic, of which he afterwards distributed a corrected version, which yields nowise in vehemence to his speech against Catiline, and made an immense impression on the Roman public. Under such circumstances, nothing but an appeal to arms could decide the contest. Antony went to Brundisium, to take the command of the four legions which, as we have said, he recalled from Macedonia. These troops, however, treated the donative which he offered them with contempt, and refused to follow him. Upon this, he further exasperated the soldiery by the slaughter of some hundred subaltern officers, sergeants, and privates. In consequence, one legion (quarta) transferred its allegiance to Octavius; another (Martia) encamped separately near Alba.

Antony had hardly left the city when the aristocratical party reared its head again. Though the other consul also was absent from Rome, the tribunes convoked the senate for the 20th of December. Cicero laboured zealously for Octavius when he sued for the tribuneship, and spoke the third philippic in his favour; thus raising the enemy of his friends, in order to destroy his own. The two consuls of the following year, Aulus Hirtius and Vibius Pansa, marched into Upper Italy, at the head of an army, to the relief of Decimus Brutus, who was besieged by Antony in Mutina. Octavius accompanied them, armed with equal powers; Cicero having demanded in his behalf, in the third philippic, that he should at once be high-priest (pontifex), pro-

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prætor, and senator; should give his voice with the prætors; and, if he sued for a curule dignity, should be considered in the same manner as if he had held the rank of prætor. The struggle for Mutina was obstinate; but Antony was at length routed by a sally from the town, made simultaneously with a joint attack from Hirtius and Octavius. Antony, already proclaimed an enemy to his country, was forced to seek his safety in flight; and the republic really appeared for once to triumph, as Brutus and Cassius at this time had made themselves masters of the whole East.

Meanwhile Octavius and his friends had a pretty clear perception that a permanent coalition with the republicans was out of the question; and took their measures accordingly. Both consuls had been left dead on the field in the recent engagements; the Roman troops, scattered throughout the West, did not seem much inclined to fight in the defence of the republic; and policy suggested combination against the seventeen legions which served in the East under Cassius and Brutus. Cæsar, before his death, had assigned to his soldiers lands in Italy. Immediately on the landing of Octavius these troops had hastened to his colours: he had besides raised an army of his own, which was reinforced by the two legions which had mutinied against Antony. Moreover, all the scattered limbs of Antony's army, and, soon afterwards, the troops of the late consuls, joined his service, and, full of disaffection to the senate, felt no scruple in fighting against Rome. At this moment the chief command in Spain was held by Asinius Pollio, who hypocritically complained, in a letter to Cicero, that his services were not put in requisition. This was the same Pollio to whom Cæsar was in a great measure indebted for his success in the African war, and who soon gave further proofs of indisposition towards the aristocrats. Equally ambiguous was the conduct of Plancus, who was stationed in the south of France; though he dealt no less than Asinius Pollio in assurances of his upright intentions.

Lepidus had been destined to conduct into Spain a third extremely numerous army; Cæsar having, shortly before his death, assigned to him Spain and Southern Gaul as his province. Meanwhile he remained in Gaul; and Plancus informed Cicero that Antony relied on this army, consisting, as it did, of Cæsar's veterans, whether Cicero himself were inclined to unite with him or not. Antony took his course towards Gaul; and, however distasteful to Lepidus was his presence there, the army of the latter joined him instantly, and immediately after made its appearance in Italy, where, in a brief space, the state of affairs had undergone a complete change. The further conduct of the war against Antony had been committed by the senate, not to Octavius, but to Decimus Brutus. Mortally offended by this preference, Octavius refused to render Brutus the least assistance, marched straight to Rome, appointed himself consul, and selected Q. Pedius for his colleague.* One of his first public actions was to rescind, by a vote of the people, the resolution which declared Dolabella an enemy of his country. He next proceeded to institute an inquiry into the murder of Cæsar, to summon before him a large number of those who had taken part in it, and, on default of appearance, to pass judgment against them. Of this number were Brutus and Cassius. Already, before his march to Rome, Octavius had formed an alliance with Antony and Lepidus.† When, therefore, he put himself in motion against them in a hostile manner, it was merely for the greater convenience of oral negotiation. Their conference took place on an island in a small stream in the neighbourhood of Bologna; and Lepidus assumed the part of mediator. Before this interview between the three friends of the late dictator, the senate, on a hint from Octavius, had rescinded its decrees against

* Dio Cassius (lib. xlv. c. 46. init.) says, with a play on the words,—
*καὶ αὐτῷ καὶ συνάραξαν (εἶχε τοῦτο δεῖν, ἀλλὰ μὴ ὑπαρχον αὐτὸν εἰπεῖν) ὁ
 Π:δῖος ὁ Κύντος ἐδόθη.*

† Dio Cassius, lib. xlv. c. 43. Appian. de Bell. Civ. lib. iii. c. 80, 81.

Lepidus and Antony; and Pollio, as well as Plancus, had seized the pretext thus afforded for attaching themselves to the party which was strongest in the capital. Decimus Brutus, therefore, was left to struggle single-handed; and, so soon as the state of affairs transpired, was deserted by all his soldiers, though, shortly before, eight legions had been united under his orders.

The articles of union which were agreed upon by the new triumvirate are enumerated by Appian as follows:— Octavius was to abdicate the consulship which he then held, and to deliver it to Ventidius for the remainder of the year: a public function of an entirely novel nature, for the new ordering of the disturbed state of the commonwealth (*reipublicæ constituendæ*), was to be devolved on Lepidus, Antony, and Octavius, which was to give them equal power with the consuls, and with which they were invested for a term of five years. “They chose,” says Appian, “the title of *triumviri reipublicæ constituendæ*, on account of a subsisting law, which had been brought in by Antony himself, prohibiting the appointment of a dictator.”* These triumvirs should nominate the annual public functionaries for five years. In the division of their provinces, all Celtic land fell to Antony’s share; excepting the districts bordering immediately on the Pyrenees, which were known by the name of the old Celtic land. The remainder, with Iberia, should obey Lepidus. Octavius should have Sicily, Sardinia, Libya, and the neighbouring islands.

The main transaction, however, at the conference of the three leaders was not so much the settlement of the conditions of their union, which were made public immediately afterwards, as to concert the manner of commencing hostilities against the republican party. A reconciliation was impossible, as had long been clearly seen by the young Octavius, whose early cun-

* This appears to be a blunder of Appian, as, at any period, there could not be more than one dictator at a time.

ning, by which he was taught never to commit any unnecessary crime, nor to shrink from any which seemed necessary, is an extraordinary phenomenon in history. Extensive confiscations were by this time indispensable, to defray the expenses of the wars, as well as to enrich the soldiery. Extirpation, besides, was the only way of getting rid of enemies, and of many cowardly, weak, ambiguous friends. It was therefore resolved to annihilate the whole aristocratical party by a proscription in the manner of Sylla; and lists were agreed upon of those whose lives were to be sacrificed, or whose property was to undergo confiscation. In all this, the advanced age and rapacity of Lepidus, whom Antony termed in derision *father*, played a part in the last degree despicable. His name, and whatever influence had been bequeathed him by Cæsar, were made use of; he was allowed to share the odium of the crimes of his colleagues; but they had no disposition to yield him any part of their fruits. Antony, who was always more concerned for the enjoyment of the moment than for the prospect of any future advantage, followed the bent of his unbridled inclinations; and Octavius alone, with craft which a greybeard might have envied, awaited the issue of the approaching conflict, to suit his measures to circumstances.

The number of senators whose names were placed on the first list of the proscribed is estimated by Plutarch at 300, while other authorities make it a third less. Of the richer class, or equestrians, 2000 fell a sacrifice; and very many even of the lower orders. Moreover, each of the triumvirs, by way of showing straightforward dealing, gave up one of his nearest relations or friends. Octavius might, perhaps, feel no great difficulty in giving up Cicero, as the latter, according to Appian, had played a very ambiguous part when the former sought, by military aid, to extort the consulship. That species of state-craft, besides, which counselled the suppression of every kind of independent agency, required above all the destruc-

tion of Cicero, and some seventeen other senators, who, as upright and impartial men, had latterly possessed an ascendant influence. The proceeds of massacre and plunder, which went on throughout the whole year, sufficed indeed to keep the troops, and keep them attached to the triumvirs, but by no means sufficed to carry on the war with Brutus and Cassius; and the less so, as Antony launched into such an ocean of extravagance, that Octavius was obliged to make him advances from his private means. The most scandalous devices were employed to discover hidden treasures; the holiest of sanctuaries, the temple of Vesta, could no longer secure the wealth deposited there; all descriptions of imposts were exhausted; and even the assertors of freedom, Cassius and Brutus, were obliged, like their antagonists, to resort to practices of extortion.

The passage of the republican forces from Asia into Europe compelled the triumvirs, who had divided the West among themselves, to hasten the decision of the contest. They left a portion of their forces behind in Italy under Lepidus, whom with Plancus they had appointed to the consulship of the current year, and marched with the remainder of their force against the republicans. Antony first appeared in Greece, and detached Norbanus in advance, to occupy the passes between Thrace and Macedon on the Nessus. Norbanus would have blocked up the republicans in Thrace, had not a Thracian prince conducted them through the mountains by an unknown route, by which they arrived at Philippi, where they encamped. An engagement was inevitable; Antony having, with great rapidity, come up to the assistance of Norbanus. Octavius joined with his forces ten days afterwards. The destiny of Rome was decided in two successive actions. In the first the republican leaders, on the whole, had the advantage; their numerical force being equal, if not superior, to that of the enemy. Unfortunately, Cassius, in a very premature fit of despair, closed his own career by self-murder. The second battle, which

took place about three weeks after the first, was decisive in favour of Antony and Octavius. Brutus, like his colleague, chose a voluntary death: his army was wholly dispersed, destroyed, or incorporated with that of the conqueror.

Antony turned his course towards the east, proceeded to Egypt, and plunged into all the debaucheries, which the Syrian and Egyptian courts had carried to as high a pitch as human invention could go. Cleopatra lavished the wealth and arts of her realm to enchant his senses. He seemed at her side to forget entirely Italy and the affairs of the west, sunk his public character altogether, and did not resume it till the tidings that all Asia was overrun by the Parthians, and that in Italy Octavius was endeavouring to exclude him from any partnership in the general government, forced him again to surround himself with the insignia and instruments of empire.

Antony had at first viewed with indifference the ill success and ill treatment of his relatives and adherents in Italy, and the ravages of the Parthians in Asia. It was not till matters proceeded to extremities on both sides that he quitted Alexandria for Tyre. On his arrival there, the danger from the desultory incursions of Parthians, which were easily repelled at any time, appeared less urgent than that which arose from the machinations of Octavius. Accordingly he went without delay to Asia Minor, and from thence to Greece. At Athens he met Fulvia, and the meeting does not seem to have been eminently cordial: however, his worthy consort died soon afterwards. Antony at first declined the alliance of Sextus Pompey; but, as Octavius made demonstrations of barring his entrance into Italy, on second thoughts he formed his alliance, and, in concert with his new colleague, held Italy in a state of siege, by preventing all imports of grain into the peninsula. Italy was now threatened with famine, in addition to all the other horrid accompaniments of a civil war, when the mutual friends of Antony and Octavius came for-

ward as mediators, concerted a new division of the Roman world, made up a marriage between Antony and his rival's sister, Octavia; and, on the other hand, persuaded the former to give up his alliance with Sextus Pompey.

u. c.
714
to
715. A year and a quarter Antony and Octavius lived together in Rome. They were soon forced, by the clamours of a famine-stricken people, to conclude a peace with Sextus Pompey, on terms securing him five years' possession of Sardinia, Sicily, and even of Peloponnesus. The latter district he never got possession of, as Antony alleged he had many demands on the inhabitants; and these, it should of course be understood, must be defrayed by Pompey. These demands were, in fact, for arrears of taxes and of forced contributions, which had been laid on the inhabitants at the discretion, or rather the pleasure, of Antony, who was revelling now in Athens, as before in Alexandria, living amongst Greeks as a Greek, and honourably striving to deserve the title of *the younger Bacchus*.

Meanwhile his lieutenant, Ventidius, drove the Parthians out of Asia Minor and Syria, retook all the places which they had captured, and levied enormous contributions from all the states and sovereigns who had entered into any friendly relations with them. At this time, new hostilities broke out with Sextus Pompey. Antony found it necessary twice to revisit Italy, first from Athens, afterwards from Syria. On the second occasion he fell in with Octavius at Tarentum, and consented that he should carry on the war with Sextus Pompey; he even transferred to him part of his own fleet, and in return received a reinforcement of two legions from Octavius for the Parthian war.

Before his second above-mentioned reappearance in Italy, Antony had earned but little glory in Syria; and, after his return to the East, he sacrificed his honour as a soldier, and his troops, in two successive expeditions, exactly at the epoch when Octavius was completing his preparations to deprive him of his share in the empire

of the world. On his return to the East, his project was to penetrate, by the aid of the king of Armenia, into the mountainous regions of Media, where a native Median empire, of which he meant to besiege the capital, existed in close alliance with the Parthians. The king of Armenia deserted him, however, in the moment of danger; his baggage was captured; an army of 10,000 men, which he had left behind to cover it, was totally cut to pieces; the Parthians kept him closely blockaded, and cut off all his supplies. Praaspa, which he was laying siege to, was situated in the mountains, near which is the site of the present capital town of Tehran. Even Antony's confidence was dashed by the disheartening incidents of a siege in the elevated and chilly mountain ranges of these regions.* Finding himself in danger, with his whole army, of perishing as ignominiously as Crassus had done before him, he finally raised the siege, and directed his march through the higher parts of Armenia, a land which Dio Cassius terms with justice one of perpetual ice. During this march, his army was continually on the point of disbanding; and had not the Parthians slaughtered all deserters ostentatiously in the sight of the Roman ranks, whole troops would have gone over *en masse* to the enemy. Octavius, in the mean time, was collecting an immense force; which was the more to be depended upon, as he either disbanded, or settled on lands, or put to the sword, mutinous spirits.† He found occupation for the rest in regions inhabited by the most formidable enemies of the Roman name, in the mountains of Spain, in Gaul, in Pannonia, and Dalmatia, while Antony was engaged in a fresh enterprise on the Euphrates against his ally the king of Armenia, to whom he mainly ascribed the loss of his Parthian expedition. As he durst not at once commence open hostilities on his ancient ally, he gave invitations to the Armenian monarch to meet

u. c.
718.

* Τό τε σύμπαν," says Appian, "πολιρχεῖν δοκῶν, τὰ τῶν πολιρχουμένων ἕτασχεν. — Lib. xlix. c. 32.

† Appian. de Bell. Civ. lib. v. c. 128—130. Dio Cass. lib. xlix. c. 34—38.

him, first in Egypt, afterwards, having commenced his march on his dominions, in Nicopolis, that is to say, not far from the frontiers of his territory. As Antony approached the Armenian capital, Artaxata, the king, durst not provoke his enmity by showing unabated want of confidence in his protestations of friendship: he accordingly appeared in the camp; but was instantly made prisoner, and the fortresses in his dominions summoned in his name to surrender. However, the Roman general's expectations of getting possession of the treasures and the castles of Armenia, by virtue of the commands of the entrapped monarch, were baffled. But what he failed in compassing by fraud, he wrung by force. He occupied with his troops the whole of Armenia, dividing them in different stations; betrothed his son by Cleopatra with a Median princess; and, in alliance with the sovereign of Media, was about to attack the Parthians, when the enmity which Octavius had long nourished in secret against him burst out into overt acts of hostility.

The two rivals, Octavius and Antony, who, to a certain point, had pursued the same route, were at this time committed in widely different courses, which led to destinations as different — the one to destruction, the other to the sovereignty of the Roman world. Conscious of his own deficiencies, Octavius had raised Agrippa, a man of the lowest origin, from step to step to the highest public dignities, used his services in the most difficult situations, and entrusted to him the chief command in the war with Sextus, although he was himself present. It was planned to attack Sicily from Italy, by sea and land, on two sides at once; on the third Lepidus was to land with the numerous African legions, and the main attack was conducted by Agrippa. Assailed at once on both sides, and equally incapable of daring resolution and timid prudence, Pompey was overthrown in a single engagement, fled to Asia, and met his death in Phrygia. Lepidus had hoped to share in the spoil, as he had shared in the victory: he was not only de-

ceived in that hope, but lost what was already in his possession. No sooner had Octavius learned that Lepidus, without consulting him, had closed a treaty with the Pompeians, taken them under his protection, and even taken possession of Messina, than he went to his camp, regarding him as so utterly insignificant that his soldiers would desert him without ceremony. He deceived himself, it is true, in that point, and narrowly escaped the shots and swords of the soldiers, indignant at his audacity. As it soon, however, appeared that Lepidus durst not meet a decisive conflict, his troops were easily gained by Octavius, and deserted to the enemy with their standards and eagles. Lepidus was so truly insignificant that Octavius spared him, and did not even deprive him of the priestly office with which he had been invested; it being a Roman usage that the three chief sacerdotal dignities only expired with the life of him to whom they had been given.

To justify a predetermined rupture with Antony, Octavius took advantage of his levities in conduct. He refused to receive his noble consort, Octavia, who had travelled as far as Athens to join him with valuable presents, and quitted Armenia with no other aim than to visit Cleopatra in Egypt. Octavius had long and vainly endeavoured to move the Roman senate, where Antony had many friends, to violent measures against him, till Antony himself declared war, and proceeded, still accompanied by Cleopatra, to Ephesus. Even then the senate declared war with Cleopatra, not with her paramour, and only recalled Antony from his Asiatic sovereignty.

The cause of this declaration of war, and of Antony's final ruin, was, in fact, Cleopatra, whose influence estranged his truest Roman friends from him. It was at her instigation he had formed that alliance with the Median prince, which Octavius put forward as a main charge against him. Antony's land force was in a very feeble condition: the better troops unquestionably were those of his antagonist. Cleopatra and her courtly circle

wasted his whole time, and kept soberer councils at a distance. However, at length he resolved to confide chiefly in his fleet, that, after a naval victory, he might lead his army direct to Italy, where he was well assured of an amicable reception. The presumption which on all occasions inebriated his mind did not desert him in the last decisive moments of his destiny, in which, to all appearance, he might have anticipated the enemy. He loitered and trifled at Ephesus; spent farther time in revels at Samos; held processions and feasts in Cleopatra's honour at Athens; and having, in spite of these delays, reached the coast of Epirus with his land army and fleet before the autumn, instead of making any attempt to land on the coast of Italy, he let his fleet and army starve out the winter on the shores of Greece, delaying till the following year the issue of the contest, when that issue came to be tried under most unfavourable circumstances. Octavius landed in Epirus without meeting resistance; the armies were confronted with each other on the bay of Ambracia, and the hostile fleets came in sight near Actium.

v. c.
722.

CHAP. III.

FROM THE BATTLE OF ACTIUM TO THE REIGN OF TIBERIUS.

IN the engagement at Actium, Cleopatra had taken a separate station in a vessel easy to be distinguished by its royal ensigns. According to the commonly received account of the action, she took to flight so soon as its event appeared doubtful, and long before it could really be decided. Sixty ships followed her; and Antony no sooner perceived it, than he hastened after her, probably in hopes of bringing her back, but let himself be persuaded to enter her ship, and to accompany her flight before the day was hopeless. A very slight alteration of this story improves its probability, while it spoils its romance. Cleopatra, it would seem, took flight the moment it was visible that the fortune of the day turned against Antony; and was followed by the Egyptian division of the fleet. Upon this Antony, seeing that the remainder of his fleet, which had principally depended on its Egyptian auxiliaries, could no longer maintain the conflict, lost his presence of mind, and fled in like manner. The greater part of his fleet was destroyed; the legions, which he had not even informed of his movements, in part deserted to Octavius, and were in part dispersed by his forces. Octavius crossed over into Asia, where he found no resistance and no difficulty in crowning and deposing monarchs, taking possession of provinces, and laying towns under contribution*; while his friends Mæcenus and Agrippa, whom he had sent to Italy to pacify the soldiers, found considerable obstacles to executing this commission. Disturbances in the neighbourhood of Brundisium among the troops, whose rewards Agrippa had been instructed to put off to another time, recalled the victor from Asia. But the disturbances in Italy having been

* Dio Cass. Hist. Rom. lib. i. c. 2.

stilled in less than a month, he hastened back to the east, expecting to find in Egypt more resistance than he afterwards met with. Cleopatra had just returned to Egypt, while Antony had betaken himself to the army assembled at Paratonium under Pinarius Scarpus. Here, however, neither he nor his emissaries found reception; he therefore hastened back to his paramour. Cleopatra intended to build a fleet on the Red Sea; but the Arabs, incited by Octavius's officers in Syria, burned the docks erected by her orders, while Octavius, with two armies, threatened the invasion of Egypt both on the side of Africa and Syria. The army destined to guard the African frontier against Octavius revolted: Antony and Cleopatra at one time gave themselves up to stupefying indulgences, at another treated with Octavius, who protracted the negotiations, to lull them into perfect security. At length after long dallying, and just at the moment when Octavius's army approached Alexandria from two sides, Antony rallied his faculties, and resolved to sell his life dear. His first attack on the advancing enemy turned out advantageously. He therefore resolved to make a fresh attempt by sea and land to repulse them; but the Egyptian fleet surrendered to the enemy without resistance, and his cavalry treacherously deserted just when their aid was wanting. Antony, apparently not without reason, suspected himself betrayed by Cleopatra. Nevertheless he wounded himself mortally on the intelligence that the queen had slain herself; and, discovering that the intelligence was premature, caused himself to be brought dying into her presence. Cleopatra was herself possessed of a sure poison, but would not use it till she had ascertained, on a personal interview with Octavius, what impression her charms had power to make on him. She soon, however, perceived that no strong passion could be aroused in Octavius, and observed that his orders indicated her destination to grace his triumph: she frustrated his plan, therefore, by suicide.

In like manner as Octavius, immediately on the death of the only two persons who could still offer him any resistance in any part of the Roman world, proceeded to arrange the affairs of Egypt, and of the whole east, as seemed best to himself and to those of whom he commonly asked counsel, in the same way it would have been desirable that he should have immediately given a new constitution or form of government to the empire, at whose head he now stood, instead of adhering scrupulously to old institutions and usages, the spirit of which had long fled. But his object was to veil the frightful novelty in the form of the empire, which must henceforth be a military monarchy. This, however, could be done only so long as the character of the ruler was as quiet and forbearing as his own. The moving principle of the new government will be presently seen to come prominently forward under his successor.

The administration of Egypt seems to have called forth the especial attention of Octavius; and he gave directions concerning it which differed altogether from his general provincial regulations. He prohibited Roman senators from visiting the country without special permission. This regulation, indeed, was in force with respect to all the provinces. But he also forbade the higher class of Egyptians from making any long sojourn in Rome. The motive of these restrictive measures, as well as of the abolition of all the rights of a free Grecian town, which had previously been enjoyed by Alexandria, including all assemblies of the people, of the council, and the freely elected public officers, may be found in the restless character of the Greek population of Lower Egypt, and especially of Alexandria; a city which, under the last Ptolemies, had been accustomed to give laws to its rulers, and which possessed immense wealth, and an enormous population.

From Egypt, Octavius travelled through Judea into Syria, and appointed the murderer of the last branch of the Asmonæan or Maccabæan house independent prince over part of Judæa. This was done, as appeared in

the sequel, partly to reward Herod for the aid which he had afforded him, but more especially to inure the Jews by degrees to Roman government, as Herod was little more than a Roman officer with a royal title. The presence of Octavius in Syria gave him opportunity to mix in the most prudent manner in Parthian affairs; and in this manner he afterwards obtained, as a voluntary concession, the delivery of the captured spoil and officers of Crassus, which Antony had vainly sought to extort by force of arms. Two Parthian princes contested with each other the throne. Octavius took the part of the one without attacking the other; and secured himself an influence in the Parthian kingdom doubly—first, by granting the pretender to the crown an asylum and protection in the Roman empire, without giving him aid for the attainment of the throne; secondly, by retaining as an hostage a prince of the reigning house, whom the pretender to the throne had placed in his hands.

In Rome, and throughout Italy, all preparations were made to receive Octavius. He had brought sufficient sums with him to satisfy the soldiery from the treasures of Egypt, and the tributes which he had levied in Alexandria. But the Roman people and the senate, whose resolutions were prompted by those who are ever ready with their homage to the rising sun, loaded him with prerogatives, distinctions, and honours, which even he regarded as overstrained. Amongst these was the new-coined title of *AUGUSTUS*, or the *Awful*, which he professed to accept merely as a name of respect, not importing the odious attributes of royalty, or those of dictatorship, abolished since the death of Cæsar. It would, indeed, be absurd to attach any importance to the circumstance that the new ruler would not accept any but civic honours, and these only for a specified term of years; or that he spoke in his cabinet and the senate of laying down his rank in the state, and, pursuant to Agrippa's counsel, restoring the republic. It never could have entered his mind to do so in good earnest. The Roman world, moreover, would have gained nothing by it,

since *Republic* and *Universal Empire* are ideas irreconcilable. In effect, his aim was directed from the outset to disguise the reality of military monarchy under the forms of the old constitution. He made donatives to his army, purged it of slaves, bandits, and rabble of all sorts, who had been mixed with it of late years, and distributed the main divisions on the Euphrates, on the Rhine, and on the Danube; while in other parts of the empire, and especially in Italy, only single divisions were stationed, and Rome was at first left free from soldiery. This policy is easily conceivable, as the city populace, loaded with donatives, crammed with food, and entertained with spectacles, had no disposition whatever for rebellion; while the new senate, selected by Augustus out of the mixed mass, which from time to time had been thrust into that body, consisted partly of his own creatures, and the rest was so contemptible that no danger whatever was to be feared from it.

From this moment every thing depended on the personal qualities of the ruler. As imperator, he was generalissimo in war; as *præfectus morum*, he was more than ever the censor had been in time of peace; as *pontifex maximus* (since the death of Lepidus), he had power to suit to his purposes ceremonial rites and usages. Through the consular powers conferred upon him, even when he was not consul, he had the executive; and as permanent tribune, he represented the people, and united its collective powers in his person.* The tribunate was thus, indeed, completely changed in its character, the more so as its authority now extended beyond the walls of the city, which had formerly circumscribed its jurisdiction. The senate, which Augustus reduced from 1000 to 600 members, retained in appearance all its former attributes, but in effect was modified, so as to be merely a machine for giving a show of legality to certain regulations, and at the same

* *Mém. de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres*, t. xxvii. p. 438. et seq.

time to assemble a sort of peerage of the realm around the head of the state, who at first had neither court nor representative ministry. The whole senate was to assemble only twice a month (on the first days of the month, and on the ides), and was prorogued during September and October. It is obvious that the government of a great empire could not be conducted by so otiose an assembly. A committee, re-elected every half year (*consilia semestria*), took the place of the collective body. This committee thus served the prince as a privy council — a nursery where the talents of public men might be formed and put to the test. The popular assemblies were mere shadows of old times: the remains of practical freedom, which existed even under the Cæsars, exclusively resided in the populous towns and those districts comprised within the circuit of the empire, which enjoyed such freedom as could consist with the requisitions of general policy; for the caprice of subordinate functionaries was now submitted to strict control.

In a military empire, girt around with warlike nations, from time to time occasions could not be wanting (even under a government which acted on the principle that the bounds of the empire should not be extended) to call into use against external enemies the army which Augustus kept under strict discipline. But, except the expeditions on the left bank of the Rhine, these wars are all so trifling that they scarcely deserve mention. As Cæsar had before subdued Britain, Augustus constantly made as if he would turn his arms against that island. Nothing, however, came of these demonstrations. Under the pretext of discipline, he now ceased to employ the appellation of *commilitones*, and addressed his soldiers only as *milites*.

Augustus aimed entirely to incorporate the left bank of the Rhine with the empire by means of colonies, and by the diffusion of the Roman manners and habits. But this scheme led him further than he originally intended, and drew upon the Romans the second over-

throw which they had suffered from barbarians in the open field since the wars with the Cimbri.

It is remarkable, that just at the time when the old constitution of Rome had fallen, those nations which afterwards overthrew the empire first showed themselves in a formidable manner. Since the days of Cæsar, particular German tribes, the most considerable of whom were the Ubii, in the neighbourhood of Cologne, and the Vangiones, Triboci, Nemeti, between Schlettstadt and Oppenheim, had formed settlements on the left bank of the Rhine, and had gradually adopted Roman habits. The Romans called the district from Schlettstadt to Cleves, where the last permanent stations of their legions (*castra vetera*) appear to have been placed, *the first and second Germany*, maintained relations of commerce with the inhabitants on the nearer side, and fortified several places on the Rhine. However, as yet they durst not venture across the river. Even the bold and high-minded Agrippa, who for some time held the chief command in Gaul, shrunk from a war with the nations on the right bank of the Rhine, and preferred to give his allies the Ubii settlements on Roman ground. Since Agrippa's removal, certain tribes of the barbarians made excursions over the left bank, after having first cruelly murdered the Roman traders who had ventured amongst them. Lollius, a man of consular rank, but of contemptible character, was then at the head of the legions on the left bank of the Rhine, and hastened up to cut off the retreat of the invaders, or at all events deprive them of their booty. However, before he expected an attack, they came upon him, and he was slain with the loss of the eagle of one of the legions which he commanded. Augustus was at that time on a journey to Gaul: his arrival restored confidence to the Gauls, and repressed the marauding parties of the Germans. He thought it necessary, for the honour of the Roman arms, to act on the offensive; and appointed one of his stepsons to execute the measures required for that purpose.

U. C.
738.
B. C.
16.

Drusus and Tiberius, stepsons of Augustus by his wife Livia, had about this time obtained successes over the German and Sarmatian tribes southwards of the Danube. The latter had penetrated into the interior of Hungary. Drusus had not only conquered, together with his brother Tiberius, the German or Celtic inhabitants of Rætia and Vindelicia, who would not submit to the Roman yoke, but had also founded colonies on the Danube, and in Passau, Augsburg, and Memmingen, which afterwards grew to important towns. Augustus placed the latter at the head of the legions on the Rhine, which he led into the interior of Germany; while his brother Tiberius conquered the Sarmatian tribes in Dalmatia.

The campaigns of Drusus and Tiberius threw so bright a lustre on the reign of Augustus, that the overthrow which Varus suffered afterwards in Germany, and the resistless pressure of the tribes on the north-east frontier of the empire, spread a double terror amongst the Romans. In the fifth year of his command, Drusus had terrified by repeated attacks the populations which did not belong to the great league of the Suevi, and had fortified a whole chain of military posts on the right bank of the Rhine. The principal results of these campaigns was the erection of some forts on the Taunus, the number of which was augmented at a later period; the fortification of a town named Aliso, near Elsen, in the district of Paderborn; some advanced works on the Ems and beyond it; and, finally, a line of petty fortresses on the Rhine. Another plan failed. Drusus attempted with miserable vessels to reconnoitre from the mouth of the river the north-eastern coast of Germany, and establish his power between the Ems and the Weser. But his crews had neither adroitness nor experience, nor science enough for the dangerous navigation along the coasts of the Northern ocean.

Immediately after the death of Drusus, the Romans very zealously embraced this part of his plan, and allied themselves with the northern populations of Ger-

U. C.
741
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745.
B. C.
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9.

many, which were held together by no great league, or subjugated them singly, so that they even laid down roads towards the embouchures of the Rhine and over the marshes on the Ems.* Tiberius and other officers penetrated farther and farther into the interior of Germany; inured the inhabitants of the countries betwixt the Rhine and Weser to Roman habits, luxuries, and laws; and treated the several populations as the Romans were every where accustomed to treat those whom they called their allies.

Unfortunately for the Romans, Augustus appointed Quinctilius Varus, a man who had commanded in Syria, leader of the powerful armies now stationed in the interior of Germany. This officer gave himself up to a besotted security, and plumed himself on seeing barbarians stand like Romans before his tribunal, while at the same time he treated those barbarians with Roman arrogance. Arminius, or Hermann, prince of the Cherusci, had learned in Roman society and service Roman wisdom or cunning. Hermann aimed, by means of a general league of all the nations in the north-west of Germany, to put an end at once to the power of the Roman invaders east of the Rhine. Quinctilius Varus, blinded by his own arrogance, deceived himself as to the purpose of these movements, and allowed himself to be taken in a snare which was laid with more cunning than he had expected of the rude and simple people he had to contend with. Five years long Quinctilius had exercised uncontrolled power from the Rhine as far as the Elbe and East Friesland, and had taken up his ordinary residence at Cassel or Münden, when hostilities in the north of Westphalia seemed to require his presence. Incited and accompanied by the ringleader of the native league, he marched with his whole force to quell these disturbances; and his German friends guided him into defiles, wholly impassable, in the district of Detmold. In this situation, the Romans being

* Tacit. *Annal.* lib. iv. c. 11.

unable to move either back or forwards, and their march being besides impeded by rain and tempest, the Germans deserted *en masse* from the Roman army, which was now attacked on all sides by the combined tribes. In this engagement an army of above 24,000 men, three legions, and as many squadrons of horse, with the other troops attached to them, perished with their ill-fated general; all the forts and posts on the right bank of the Rhine were taken; and all the Roman writers agreed that since the defeat of Crassus, no severer blow had ever struck the Roman people.

Augustus and the whole metropolis were plunged in such consternation by the news of this defeat, that any one might have supposed the Germans already at the gates of Rome. The severest measures were taken to complete with the utmost expedition the numbers of the legions in the neighbourhood. It was on this emergency strikingly apparent, that the citizens of Rome, and even of Italy, had already ceased to constitute the main strength of the armies which bore their name, and defended their dominions. Dio Cassius * thus describes the utter decay of the Roman spirit:—"There was now no vigorous youth left in the city; and even the Italian allies were no longer serviceable.† Nevertheless Augustus levied a new force as well as he could, out of such materials as existed; and as none of those who had reached the age of military service volunteered to serve, he drew conscripts by lot. Of those who had not yet attained the age of thirty-five, every fifth—of those who were older, every tenth—man was enlisted: whoever practised any evasion, lost his possessions and was dishonoured. At last, even these rigours having failed to force many into the service, some were ordered for execution. Many whose term of service had expired were included in the conscription; and as many freedmen as could be found were enrolled in the troops destined for Germany. When Tiberius appeared on the Rhine with the reinforcements thus provided, he did not find

* Lib. lvi. c. 23.

† ἰσχυράκωτο.

it advisable again to take possession of the posts in central Germany which had been held before the defeat of Varus. He crossed the Rhine, indeed, to show that the Romans were not utterly crushed, but remained only a short time, and even gave up the new forts on the Taunus.

If these disasters in Germany and Pannonia for a while disturbed the tranquillity of Augustus, the vices and misfortunes of those whom he loved with greatest tenderness embittered the whole course of his life. He perceived that every reasonable man had long recognised, that the Roman empire could not subsist otherwise than as a monarchy. He saw no possibility of making a compact whole of a body politic composed of parts so heterogeneous; and must therefore have felt the more solicitude whom he should appoint to succeed him at the head of the military monarchy of which he was the founder. He was without male heirs: his sister's son appeared to him more fitted, and also better entitled to succeed him, than two stepsons whom Livia had brought into his house. He therefore married Octavia's son (Marcellus) to his daughter Julia, and treated him as his future successor. Marcellus's character seems to have resembled that of his mother: like her, he was loved by all who knew him, as well as by the people. But he was snatched away by an early death. Livia now used every artifice to introduce her sons into all public affairs, and to set them at the head of the armies. She possessed the art, without appearing to mix in public business, of leading her husband in all things; she tolerated his frequent infidelities, and even stooped to assist his designs on the fair sex: in short, she knew his weak points, and how to take advantage of them. Her sons learned to dissemble from their youth upwards; and their mother contrived that their names should early be mentioned before all others in every important military enterprise or public transaction. Notwithstanding, however, all that is told of the power of Livia over Augustus, the latter appears to

have guessed very correctly at the character of his stepsons, and only in the last resort to have resolved on yielding them the succession. After the death of Marcellus, he preferred to them Agrippa, to whom he was indebted for his victories, and whom he had already favoured in every possible manner, married him to Marcellus's widow, and treated him as heir to the throne. Agrippa too died, and, after his death, Tiberius again appeared wherever the presence of an extraordinary imperial plenipotentiary seemed necessary; but he was again forced into the back-ground so soon as Caius and Lucius, the two sons of Agrippa, were of an age fitted for public employment. Sons of a worthless and shameless mother, corrupted by bad education and flattery, both of these youths were utterly incapable of taking a lead in public affairs; and had no turn, moreover, for martial enterprise. Their early death, however, was a loss to the world, as it imposed upon Augustus the necessity of transmitting to Tiberius unlimited dominion over the whole of the then known and civilised world.

CHAPTER IV.

VIEW OF LIFE AND MANNERS FROM THE FIRST CONSULSHIP
OF POMPEY AND CRASSUS TO THE SECOND TRIUMVIRATE.

THE gradual introduction, during the latter years of the republic, of the order of things which permanently took place under the empire, will appear on closer inspection of the character and manners displayed in the occurrences of those years. The external forms only of the ancient constitution survived up to the times immediately previous and subsequent to the battle of Pharsalia; and even these were destined to sink in horrible convulsions, in order to make room for a new regimen, which, formed as it was out of elements supplied by an enfeebled generation, as might be supposed, was not of a very pure or sound description.

The circumstances attendant on the banishment and return of Cicero remarkably show the distracted state of the social and political system. On this occasion, too, we are supplied with data for estimating the wealth and outlay necessary to support the rank of a Roman senator, not of the most opulent class. Cicero's house in Rome, and his two houses in the country, had been pulled down. His friends subscribed to indemnify him for these losses. His town-house was valued at H. S. vicies (about 16,000*l.*). This valuation he did not so much complain of, though he affirmed that the house had cost him nearly twice the amount (H. S. 35 ies). On the other hand, he taxed with unfairness the price set on his country-houses. of which the Tusculan was valued *quingentis millibus* (about 4000*l.*), and the Formian at only half that amount.

“ This last valuation,” he says*, “ was blamed ex-

* Ep. ad Attic. l. iv. ep. 3.

tremely, not only *ab optimo quoque*, but even by the common people. You will ask, then, how it could take place. They ascribe it to my modesty, in neither refusing what was offered, nor urgently demanding more. But that is not it; for that would rather have told for me. The truth is, my Pomponius, those same people, those, I say, with whom you are not unacquainted, who cut my wings, do not wish them to grow again."

The reign of open violence was also that of prevailing corruption. The multitude were more and more worked as a mere machine against the senate. The heads of parties stationed men at tables or counters, similar to money changers on the forum, not only publicly to bid for the suffrage of the citizens, but to hire for their principals willing tools of murder and of plunder. "The people," says Plutarch *, "went away from the pay-tables, after engaging not only to prostitute their votes, but to do battle with bow, sword, or sling for those who took them in pay. Often they did not disperse till they had stained the rostra with blood, and thrown the town, like a vessel without steersman, into such total anarchy, that men of understanding would have been satisfied with nothing better than transition from these tempests and mockeries to a monarchy. This description does not seem exaggerated when compared with a passage which occurs in Cicero's letters to Atticus.†

These operations had much the same effect on the Roman money-market that political news have on our exchanges; and the rate of interest fluctuated exactly as the state of the poll. We find from Cicero's letters that money was sometimes so abundant in Rome, as to be lent at the low rate of 4 per cent.‡ It rose to 8 per cent. at the contested election for consul, when Cæsar exerted himself for Memmius, Pompey for Domitius. Nor is this rise to be wondered at, when Cicero has

* Plut. in Cæs. c. 28.

† "Nummis ante comitia tributim uno loco divisis."—Ep. lib. x. ep. 17.

‡ *Tricentis usuræ.*

recorded that the first tribe, of which the vote was commonly decisive, often received for it *centies* (about 75,000*l.*)*

In order rightly to estimate the effects of these abandoned proceedings, it must be remembered that the men who habitually indulged in them could forge decrees of the senate and resolutions of the people at pleasure, either because the requisite number to form assemblies was undefined, or because, where a decision had taken place, it was easily falsified.

If, however, the state was falling to pieces, the ruling families degenerate, morals almost wholly destroyed, it has already been seen, in a former chapter of this work, that public talents and personal accomplishments never were more abundant than precisely in these last years of the commonwealth. The source of these distinguishing qualities is not so much to be sought in the diffusion of Greek literature and book learning, as in the practical view of human life, from one end of the earth to the other, afforded to the Roman in the course of his pursuit of fortune. We find Romans spread over all countries. Men of every rank and condition were freed by the easy purchase of slaves from attention to the commonest employments; contracted in the provinces a natural sense of superiority; and brought from thence to the capital the arts and inventions of all countries.

From Asia Minor, where the confluence took place of the primitive Asiatic with the Greek culture, where nigh to the cradle of humanity Grecian states bloomed forth, and the barbarians were not so much coerced by force of arms as constrained by the resistless power of civilisation, the Roman grandees, even before a new fount of fertile contemplations was opened to them in Egypt, derived the branches of knowledge, which, from the time of Augustus downwards, were applied variously in public transactions as well as in private life. From these regions Lucullus brought our best fruits, the staple

* Ad Quint. Frat. l. ii. ep. 15. Ad Attic. l. iv. ep. 15.

products of the warmer parts of Europe. From thence, too, lemons were brought, at a somewhat later period, and became renowned by the name of Median apples. In Alexandria Cæsar learned the divisions of time which served as his model in converting the Roman lunar into a solar year. This alteration, which was introduced pursuant to the directions of Cæsar, and under the conduct of the astronomer Sosigenes, whom he had brought with him from Alexandria, consisted principally in abolishing the reckoning by lunar months, and consequently the arbitrary intercalation of whole months into the Roman year. How necessary was this reform of the calendar may be judged from the fact, that it required the insertion of three entire months, and the year to be lengthened to 444 days, to restore coincidence between the civic and astronomical year. The arts of the East diffused themselves with wonderful rapidity from Rome into Spain, Gaul, and the left bank of the Rhine. The pasturage, husbandry, fishery, of whole provinces in Spain and Gaul entirely depended on the demand of Rome in the latter part of this period. Commerce, therefore, became, from the time of Cæsar downwards, more active than ever; the products of all parts of the world flowed into Rome: but even through this affluence, the character which we admire in the ancients, the genuine national culture, vanished.

If it be remembered that men of influence were enabled during the brief term of office to make use of public money as their own, under all sorts of pretexts; as it was difficult to bring them to account, so long as the people, the real sovereign, called for spectacles, shows, and bounties, the soldiers for donations, increase of pay, and allotments of land, on the expiry of their term of service, it cannot be matter of surprise that the enormous masses of treasure which were carried in triumphs vanished with such celerity. The victories of Lucullus and Pompey, and Cæsar's campaigns, brought all the hoards of the east and of the west into the Roman treasury. Cæsar boasted that he had added one third

to the annual public revenues. However, it is clear from his own declarations to the senate and citizens, that the public display and deposit of immense treasures had, in his time at least, become a mere farce. He acknowledges that, in order to avoid the imposition of oppressive burdens after the wars on the citizens themselves, he had been forced to levy violent contributions in the provinces, to extort heavy taxes, and to sacrifice his private property.*

What a scourge the civil wars were for the provinces, is evidenced in particular by the demands which Cæsar made after the African war on single towns and districts. Thapsus alone was forced to pay between 400,000*l.* and 500,000*l.*; Adrumetum, a third more; Tisdra and Leptis, large contributions in grain and oil; and the last-named city alone, 300,000 pounds of oil. In this way Cæsar contrived, like the later emperors, to favour sloth or violence at the expense of peaceful industry.

None of Cæsar's administrative improvements could compensate the prejudicial effects of the general rise which he made in the pay of the soldiery. Before his time, the pay of a Roman soldier had amounted to somewhat less than 5*l.* yearly; provisions were distributed only in fixed rations; and the soldier had himself to provide great part of his arms and accoutrements. Double pay and honourable mention, crowns, wreaths, and chains, were the rewards of distinguished bravery. But all these things were altered now. Old honorary distinctions lost their meaning; the soldiers who had fought at Philippi openly declared to the commissioners of Augustus at Brundisium that they looked on the old honours as a farce, and expected a recompence the value of which should not depend merely on opinion. Cæsar raised the ordinary pay to double its former amount, while he added largely to the numbers of those who were to receive it: he seized every occasion to confer especial marks of favour; made distributions of wine

* Dio Cassius, *Hist. Rom.* lib. xliii. c. 18.

oil, and salt; and was lavish of the grain wrung from the provinces.*

The consequences of this profuse liberality of Cæsar, and the military rapacity which it fomented, displayed themselves immediately after his death. According to Plutarch, Brutus spent his whole property on the army; and, according to Appian, laid that of his friends also under contribution for the same purpose. He had in Greece, before he joined with Crassus, nearly a million and a half sterling in his military chest; nevertheless he found himself obliged to resort to Crassus, and unite with him in extorting treasures in Asia, ruining Lycia, plundering public, and levying forced contributions on private funds in Rhodes. Antony, Lepidus, and Octavius were in still greater embarrassment than the leaders of the opposite party. The confiscated possessions of 200 rich and respectable citizens, whom they proscribed at their first entrance on their unprecedented office, hardly sufficed to the luxuries of Antony. To pay the troops, they were forced to practise extreme oppression in Rome and Italy; and, after all, they found themselves in urgent want of money immediately after the battle of Philippi. A tax of one per cent. was now laid on every description of property; even the Roman senators were forced to pay about three halfpence for every tile on their houses; the rich were subjected to special burdens; arms and stores were levied from towns and particular houses without compensation; and even the public festivals, which required a certain public outlay, could not be held.† It may easily be conceived that oppression went still farther in the provinces.

The power of gold, and the force of arms, were the means employed in this period to maintain a few in the lap of boundless luxury, and to keep the many in misery and abasement. Individual characters, however,

* "Frumentum, quoties copia esset, sine modo et mensurâ præbuit, et singula interdum mancipia ex prædâ viritim dedit." — *Sucton. in Cæs. c. xxvi.*

† Dio Cassius, lib. xlvi. c. 31. in fine.

deserve our admiration the more, the greater the gulf between them and their contemporaries. The recorded judgment of Bonaparte on the characters of Brutus and Cassius only show how wofully he was wanting in acquaintance with the ancients, or in any internal standard of rectitude.* In his letters to Cicero which are extant, Brutus clearly expresses his stoical principles, but is far from misapplying those principles in favour of aristocratic or oligarchical rigours, and declares himself as follows against Cicero, who at that time led the senate, and had censured him for his mildness and clemency †: — “ I hold it for a nobler and more sacred duty in every citizen of a free state to refrain from oppressing and persecuting his opponents when they are overthrown or unfortunate, than, on all occasions, to grant his powerful friends their unmeasured demands, and thereby but inflame their rapacity.” In another part of this letter, which is written under excited feelings, and without a trace of reserve or declamation, he demands: “ Is not the highest point in life attained when a man, filled with the consciousness that he has acted with uprightness, and loved freedom for its own sake, disdains all other earthly good?” ‡ That this was not a mere flourish of speech, and that Brutus himself well knew how to distinguish words from deeds, appears from another passage in his writings: — “ For my part, I have ceased to assign any value to all these acquirements, with which I know Cicero is so well furnished. He applies to himself none of all those admirable maxims about love of country, noble self-

* “ Le premier consul, répondant à Berthier, et surtout à ceux qui avaient cité les peuples anciens. . . . Eh bien, Brutus n'était qu'un aristocrate; il ne tua César que parceque César voulait diminuer l'autorité du sénat pour accroître celle du peuple. Voilà comme l'ignorance ou l'esprit de parti cite l'histoire.” — *Thibaudeau, Mémoires sur le Consulat*, p. 18.

† Cicero had written to Brutus as follows, on hearing that he had spared the life of Antony's brother, and many others: — “ Sed illam tuam distinctionem nullo pacto probo. Scribis enim acrius prohibenda bella civilia esse, quam in superatos iracundiam exercendam. Vehementer a te, Brute, dissentio, nec clementiæ tuæ concedo, sed salutaris severitas vincit manem speciem clementiæ.”

‡ “ Quid enim est melius quam memoria recte factorum et libertate contentum negligere humana?” — *Epist. ad Brutum*, ep. 16.

consciousness, death, exile, and poverty.* Cassius, professedly a follower of Epicurus, is led by his philosophy to precisely the same point to which the doctrines of Zeno guided Brutus. He jests very cleverly with Cicero on philosophical systems; points out how remote from life was the wisdom of the schools; proves that the true conception of pleasure coincides with that of pure and practicable virtue, and that the great authors of philosophical systems must not be confounded with their wretched crew of literal disciples.†

The aristocratical temper which Bonaparte falsely ascribes to Brutus and Cassius is shown, by the author of the book "De Bello Africano," to have generally prevailed amongst the party of the senate; while the sentiments of Cæsar's adherents were not unlike those of Bonaparte's guards. Cæsar's troops, however, at least were personally attached to their leader; but the soldiers of Antony and Octavius served, like those of the later emperors, for nothing but their pay, and cared for nothing but their own interest. Appian, speaking of the difficulty of maintaining discipline, strikingly describes the composition of these armies. "Most of the soldiers," he says, "were not selected from the mass of citizens, as in the civil war; armies are not formed according to ancient usage, by levying the *élite* of the Roman youth; nor are they formed for the service of their country. They serve, not the republic, but their leaders; and they do not even serve them from obedience to the laws, but because they are moved by tempting offers and promises, not against the public enemies, but their own — not against strangers, but countrymen and citizens. They consider themselves as serving, not in the armies of their country, but rather on their own account, as volunteers in the ranks of their general, who cannot gain his ends without their assistance. Formerly, desertion to an enemy was a thing unheard of: in these

* "Ego vero jam omnibus illis artibus nihil tribuo, quibus scio Ciceronem instructissimum esse," &c. &c.

† Cic. Ep. ad Diversos, lib. xv. ep. 19.

times deserters were richly rewarded ; whole troops of soldiers, and many men of the highest rank, went from one to the other party, and maintained there was no treason in doing so — they changed but a leader whose cause was good for another whose cause was no worse. The leaders looked on these things in the same point of view, and felt the necessity of tolerance ; conscious that their own command depended not on the laws, but on the promise of donatives to their armies.”

The extravagance of Antony, his senseless and abandoned excesses, his audacious contempt of all morals and usages, made it impossible for him to take the rank in the state which his talents merited, so long as a trace remained of the old discipline. He was forced to yield to Octavius, whose dissimulation and mediocrity were much better suited to the circumstances. We must not, indeed, take as authentic history all the sallies of Cicero against Antony’s manner of life. The main points, however, are neither invented nor exaggerated. Cicero has painted in the liveliest colours the profligate excesses which he obtruded on the public view ; the tyranny which the fury Fulvia exercised, in Antony’s name and in her own, throughout the Roman empire ; while Antony himself carried about with him, in an open litter, a dancer of notorious character.* Cicero has also described, in another place, the manner in which Antony made regulations at pleasure in Cæsar’s name, and held arbitrary sway over whole provinces and districts. At first, like Philip of Macedonia, Antony gained, by his unbounded expense and lavish hospitality, the very men of most use to his purposes ; that is to say, those who combined extreme corruption with high talents. Afterwards, he only drew round him flatterers and parasites : debauchery ceased to be a means, and became the end of his being. As the Greeks of these times, especially the Athenians,

* “ Vehebatur in essedo tribunus plebis ; lictores laureati anteedebant ; inter quos, aperta lecticâ, mimia portabatur ; quam ex oppidis municipales, homines honesti, obviam necessario prodeuntes, non noto illo et mimico nomine sed Volumniam consalutabant.” — *Philipp.* ii. 24.

understood the arts of flattery to a miracle, Antony in Athens played the part of a Greek surrounded by Greeks; keeping at a distance the Romans, and neglecting the state of a Roman public personage. "He affected," says Appian*, "the simplicity suitable to a private man (ἀφ'ἑλειαυ ἰδιωτικὴν); wore the square-cut Grecian mantle (σχῆμα τετράγωνον), and the Attic shoe. At his doors there were no lictors, apparitors, and officers (καὶ θυράς ἡρεμούσας). He commonly went out quite unattended. Without military insignia, with only two friends and two servants, he went to the place where the public teachers held forth, and attended their lectures. His table, too, was kept quite in the Greek fashion, and (the historian adds) μεθ' Ἑλλήνων ἢ χειμασίαι.

As Greek debauchery, coupled with oriental splendour, had reached its highest pitch at the court of Egypt, he finally renounced at Alexandria every thing that was Roman, and plainly showed that no respect for others, or regard for usage — nothing but boundless arbitrary caprice — was to be looked for from him. Even immediately after Cæsar's death, in his tours through Italy, he rioted in his inner apartments with strumpets†, while the counsellors or delegates of the allied towns were ignominiously obliged to wait in his ante-chambers, and finally, without being admitted, remanded to the following day. The anecdotes which Plutarch has related of his manner of life had been taken by his grandfather, Lamprias, from the lips of Philotas of Amphissa, who was engaged in the study of medicine at Alexandria while Antony was rioting in that city with Cleopatra. These anecdotes

* Bell. Civ. lib. v. c. 76.

† In Cicero's Epistles to Atticus, lib. x. ep. 10—13, Antony's oriental manners and habits are delineated. It is then added, "Hic tamen Cytheridem secum lectica aperta portat, altera uxorem; septem præterea conjunctæ lecticæ amicarum sunt an amicorum?" It must be observed, that two descriptions of litters were in use. Those of one kind were nothing but a sort of ottoman, on which one could be stretched at full length; the others were covered with leather, like our modern close carriages, and had apertures or windows with curtains, which could be drawn aside or together.

may in many points be exaggerated, but it is evident, from their whole tenour, that Antony had adopted the mode of life of the most profligate courts. Philotas declares himself to have seen, and ascertained from Antony's cook, that a scandalous and useless expense was regularly incurred in order that the table might be instantly served at any time. Philotas himself received, in Antony's absence, from his son, a mere boy, a present which sufficiently shows the reckless profusion with which the most contemptible adulation was rewarded. Philotas had contrived to gain a place in the good graces of this boy and of Fulvia. He was supping, with other guests, at Antony's table during his absence; and, according to Greek custom, time was beguiled with discussion. The physician drove the rest into a corner by his logical arts, till this little boy met him with a syllogism that brought him to silence* — the sly flatterer. The boy made him a present of all the gold and silver plate on the table; and the steward was quite surprised that Philotas could entertain a doubt whether Antony's son could dispose of the most costly articles without asking his father.

As Antony mocked, on principle, every feeling of humanity, he was prime mover in all the acts of cruelty which were perpetrated after the death of Cæsar. All the horrors of military tyranny were exercised as formerly under Sylla; and the despotism of later times was but the legitimate offspring of the last degenerate days of the republic. The corpses of the murdered were strewed every where — in their houses — on the streets; in short, wherever the assassin had struck them. The heads of the noblest citizens were fixed up on the Roman forum, and the atmosphere was poisoned by their bodies. Extortion, besides, was pushed to such a length, that a provision was promised the widows of the murdered as an act of grace; the sons

* The following was the boy's victorious syllogism: —

“ Cold drink ought to be given to one who has a certain fever :

Every one who has a fever, has a certain fever :

Therefore cold drink ought to be given to every one who has a fever.”

were allotted a tenth, the daughters a twentieth, of the paternal property. When, however, the division came to be made, only a few received the pittance thus extolled as favour and clemency. The plunder of the triumvirs proved, however, insufficient to cover their outlay, or even Antony's single prodigality. New imposts were laid on, and a contribution exacted of one year's rent from every house in Italy. Cruelties were practised with the most perfect deliberation: every one knew, long beforehand, when his turn would come. Each of the triumvirs had to sacrifice his best friends to the jealousy of the others; as often the best friend of the one was the most formidable obstacle to the projects of the other. Octavius, however, saved many; Lepidus, at least, helped his brother off, whom he had been obliged to place on the list to please the other two. Antony alone persecuted not the proscribed only, but all who showed any disposition to assist them; and enjoyed even at table the sight of the severed heads which were brought him. Moreover, his wife Fulvia proscribed many on her own score, whom her husband often knew nothing about—partly for money, partly for revenge. It needed many prayers from his mother Julia before Antony would accord her brother his life. In general there was no pardon, except for those who could prove to him that he never would be able to squeeze so much of their property after their death as they were ready to pay him for life. That the treasures in the temples throughout Italy, and even the precious metals which were deposited in the Capitoline temple, were spared under such circumstances, is a fact which must excite surprise. It is ascertained, however, by the circumstance, that at a later period these sacred treasures were laid under contribution as a loan from the gods.

The state of Italy was dreadful. The citizens of the towns whose treasures were plundered, whose lands were measured out for distribution to the soldiery, took up arms. The mass of peaceful citizens, whose

property was exposed to like perils in future, rose to their aid. On the other hand, the soldiery, with their friends and connections, stood for Octavius.* Every where the soldiers stationed in towns and hamlets committed the most brutal excesses; slaves escaped from their masters, and found harbour with the opposite party; fields and harvests were laid waste; agriculture brought to a stand, and a dreadful dearth was the very natural consequence. The revenue farmers, and soldiers employed to back them, were engaged in open hostilities with the people; and disorder in all transactions, confusion in all ranks, were unavoidable, as the old official dignities began to be viewed as titles and orders which the most contemptible creatures might participate. On the whole, the ancient manners and constitution were so totally lost, that the legal introduction of a new form of government was essential to the general good of the empire.

* Appian. lib. v. c. 27.

CHAP. V.

LIFE AND MANNERS DURING THE FIRST PERIOD OF THE
IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT.

BEFORE the times of Augustus, ready-made clothing, since his times, wool, was imported, and manufactured in Italy. Spanish wool had a high reputation; and, in Strabo's times, the Spanish breed of sheep had already acquired celebrity. Even Gaul no sooner became a Roman acquisition, than it experienced the effect of the immense demand for the prime articles of subsistence in the metropolis. Rome was supplied with salt provisions from the same districts of France, of which the *petits salés* are renowned in Paris at this day. It may here be remarked, that one of the reasons why salted provisions, fish, and pork, formed such prominent articles of commerce and consumption, may be found in the constant occasion for provisioning large bodies of troops. Besides the large importations from southern Russia, Spain, and Gaul, whole districts of Italy were famous for the feeding of swine. This occupation was followed on a large scale in the neighbourhood of the Po and the Adriatic, as well as in Samnium. Fine wool was imported from Asia Minor and the South of Italy, where it went through some of the processes of manufacture. In Upper Italy, on the Po, in Liguria, and in Umbria, only coarse wool was produced, and manufactured into articles for common or winter use, particularly in Mantua and Padua, where there were large manufactures.

The main point in the policy of Augustus was to satisfy the troops and the populace; how sedulously soever he might veil the true scope of his government. The revival of the old form of democracy in the popu-

lar assemblies, as of aristocracy in the senate, could not impose save on the most superficial observation. The senate, which met but twice, at most thrice, often but once a month, served no other purpose than to screen the really absolute sovereign. Assemblies of the people, elections, and canvassings he could safely tolerate; as the candidates on such occasions well knew that he kept an eye on them. For the rest, Augustus was tolerably sure of the mass of Roman citizens, having planted in Italy eight colonies, chiefly composed of disbanded soldiers; and having found means to secure to these new citizens the right of suffrage. It was impossible for the citizen of a colony or provincial town, even if he possessed the entire rights of Roman citizenship, to go to Rome on all occasions to profit by their exercise. Augustus accordingly introduced a plan by which their votes were recorded and transmitted to Rome on the day of the comitia.* He may thus be said to have laboured to spread Rome all over Italy; and his successors, pushing the same policy farther, made into Romans successively the Spaniards and the natives of other provinces; augmented the number of colonies out of Italy, and, moreover, took many foreigners into the senate. Julius Cæsar had settled above eighty thousand men in colonies out of Italy, re-peopled Carthage and Corinth, and sent colonies to Spain, Gaul, Macedon, Asia Minor, and Syria. The colonies planted by Augustus need not be enumerated: from the time of his reign downwards, they were placed along the frontiers as fortified posts for defence against the barbarians.

It had already been a part of Cæsar's policy to impress upon the laws a direction favourable to monarchy, to aggravate the rigour of penal inflictions, and to provide against the escape from justice by voluntary exile, which lay open to every Roman citizen, by annexing

* "Excogitato genere suffragiorum quæ de magistratibus urbicis decuriones, colonici in sua quisque colonia ferrent, et sub diem comitiorum ob-signata Romam mitterent."

to it the confiscation of the property of the accused. The same monarchical policy had prompted him to project the revision of Roman legislation, and the enactment of a regular code. Augustus, however, contented himself with rescinding the laws passed in the preceding revolutionary times, modifying old regulations, enacting new, and establishing regular courts of appeal, that the sovereign might be the source of all things. In the metropolis, appeals lay to the city prætor (*prætor urbanus*); in the provinces, to the provincial officers appointed for that specific function. Though, in general, Augustus abolished the laws made in the times of disturbance, he allowed, however, those to subsist which favoured the monarchical principle. Amongst these the Falcidian law deserves especial notice, as it imposed on the Roman citizens restrictions with relation to property, in the same way as a subsequent law (*lex Ælia Sentia*) restricted the manumission of slaves, and their reception into the of rank citizens. To the last days of the republic thus much remained still in force of the old family law, and the powers of parents over their children and relatives, that every one might dispose of his property wholly at discretion, and might either will or prohibit its transmission to his offspring. Thus the clientage of a wealthy patron might be greatly increased by the hopes of legacies, and he might thus attach crowds of his fellow citizens to his interests. And this took place: to be named in many wills was held an honour, and bequests from persons wholly unconnected by relationship were no unfrequent means of rising to affluence. But these links of connection between rich and poor suited not monarchy: it was accordingly enacted by the Falcidian law that the fourth part of an inheritance must be left to the natural heir; and, by consequence, the testator could dispose only of three fourths.

Much better had it been for the Romans to adopt a monarchical constitution without dissimulation or pretext. The mode of proceeding followed by Augustus

rendered deception and hypocrisy duties, and distorted all the relations of civil life. On the other hand, the provinces gained by the new regimen : a stop was put to extortions and oppressions ; the outfit of the governors was provided at the public charge ; and Augustus, during his travels, inquired into local grievances personally. He deprived of municipal franchises several towns which had abused them ; but, on the other hand, bestowed new charters on many others, paid their debts, restored their public buildings when ruined by earthquakes, and gave them the Latin or Roman right of citizenship. Those princes whom he did not chase entirely from their dominions, he reduced under a sort of feudal dependence.

At three stations, Ravenna, Forum Julii, and off the promontory of Misenum, lay squadrons of the Roman fleet. The uselessness of those enormous vessels, which were built in the east, had been sufficiently apparent at the battle of Actium. Accordingly no more of them were built ; against pirates only light craft were of service ; and it was not till later times that use was again made of the war-marine. Thus the naval establishment did not occasion much trouble or expense. With the land force, indeed, it was otherwise. Three legions were stationed in Spain ; eight on the Rhine, to intimidate the Gauls and the Germans ; two in Africa ; the same number in Egypt and Syria ; and on the Euphrates four ; three in Pannonia and on the Danube ; two in Mœsia ; two in Dalmatia. Besides there were three urban, nine prætorian, cohorts, chiefly levied in Umbria and Etruria, or in ancient Latium.

It is impossible to calculate with any exactness the amount of the public revenues under Augustus, as we do not possess any exact and consistent accounts of those revenues, but only here and there scattered notices.

Great improvements were made by Augustus in public roads and edifices. It is true that all undertakings of a public nature were conducted in a wholly

different spirit from that of older times. The sentiment of unity in the government, of absolute dependence on a single head, was thenceforth paramount from one end of the empire to the other, and was studiously suggested at every step in life, and by every object. From thenceforwards all things referred to the person of the ruler, instead of having reference, as formerly, to the general government. This is obvious even in the matter of public roads and posts. On the monument erected to commemorate the improvement of the Flaminian way, Augustus is represented as if he had been the founder and beginner of the work. It has been said that his sole motive for so zealously promoting the extension of public roads throughout the empire, was to enable the governors of provinces and other civil officers more conveniently to visit particular towns, and hold provincial councils.* This may be left matter of conjecture: what is certain is, that the senators and their sons were forbidden from visiting, without special permission, their estates in the provinces. Under Augustus Sicily alone was excepted from this prohibition. Claudius added Narbonensian Gaul.†

The regulations out of which sprung the imperial establishment of posts, were made by Augustus at first merely for the purpose of forwarding his orders, and receiving intelligence from the provinces. They consisted in the erection of houses at certain distances on the highways, where young and active persons were posted, to forward the despatches from one station to another. This description of estafette continued till the time of Nerva, when mail carriages and horses were substituted for these messengers; and a sort of government post was established for the transport of state functionaries, and emissaries to them from the central authorities.

* “Ornamento viarum munitarum princeps Augustus provincias affectit, ut præsidet, et qui pro consulibus eo munere fungerentur, facilius provincialium urbes atque conventus obirent.”

† “Galliæ Narbonensi, ob egregiam in patres reverentiam, datum, ut senatoribus ejus provinciæ non exquisitâ principis sententiâ, jure quo Sicilia laboret ir res suas invisere liceret.”

The whole system of police and of general administration was remodelled upon similar principles. A new watch (ostensibly to guard against fires) was formed. Tranquillity and security were provided for by measures of this kind, while new scope was given to the Italian love of the *far niente*. Previously to the new police regulations, highway robberies in Italy had increased to such a degree, that the honourable title of *grassator*, or highway robber, was as common as that of bandit at the commencement of the seventeenth century ; and that persons of the highest rank were no more ashamed to kidnap citizens through the instrumentality of these robbers, and to consign them to the workhouses, or outdoor toils of their slaves, than the Italian of later days to hire the assassin's poniard.

Amongst the number of new offices and dignities which Augustus created, the prefect of the watch was a sort of commandant of gens-d'armes, the prefect of the body-guard an important court functionary, who became, under Tiberius, the person of second rank in the empire. Augustus and his councillors, on the other hand, had endeavoured to prevent the military power from showing itself too prominently, and therefore conferred the post of commandant of the guard, not on a senator, nor, indeed, on any one individual, but divided it between two equestrians, and annexed to the military command no civil authority. The prefect of the city soon took on himself all affairs which had previously been transacted by the republican authorities, to whom nothing was left of their old splendour but empty titles and honours. This functionary appeared in public attended by six lictors, acted in the emperor's name, and drew within his jurisdiction not merely the department of police, but the most important part of criminal justice. The superintendence of money-changers, usurers, butcher's meat, the regulation of the police force in the city, and in a circuit of 100 Roman miles round it, was under his charge ; he was empowered, at his discretion, to pronounce the sentence of banishment ; and

those who had been banished by the emperor it was his duty to transport to their assigned place of exile.

Private life, as well as public, took a new shape. To get through the world in Rome, it became necessary for those who could not get access to the person of the sovereign, which was of course a matter of great and increasing difficulty, to attach themselves to some one of the great men of the day. These grandees had a regular court about them, and employed persons of the rank of a modern colonel as chamberlains or companions. Those who had not the means of seeking wealth and respectability, by dancing attendance on some grandee, were fain to take up one or other of those pursuits, which Horace describes as the royal roads to opulence. Contracts for the works performed for a small, enormously wealthy class, for the building of temples, the draining of marshes, sepulchral monuments, or processions, were, as Horace says, the way to get rich. Others, he says, coax ancient and wealthy widows with sweetmeats, like children, or snatch at the rich heritage of old curmudgeons, or, in secret, drive the forbidden trade of usury.*

Clientship was, indeed, an institution subsisting from time immemorial; but it was one thing to attend a patron and senator of the olden time, and another thing to wait on some punctilious Mæcenas, who narrowly spied whether the upper garment fitted the lower; how the beard was shaven; whether the clothes retained their nap, or were threadbare; whether the toga hung awry, or whether any particle of the under garments peeped from beneath the tunic. It must, however, be owned, that no trace had as yet appeared of the later oriental ceremonial. Even the country client, who carried his sandals under his arm to save them, was admitted to a place at the patron's table.

* Epist. lib. i. v. 77. See also Juvenal.

“Ædem conducere, flumina, portus,
Siccandam eluvicm, portandum ad busta cadaver.”

As money was the master-key to every sort of enjoyment, it became the sole object of pursuit; and, as honour was no longer to be otherwise had than by chance or favour, the education of youth, and the efforts of age, were exclusively bent on gain. This might have admitted of apology, had it served to promote industry, invention, art, and every species of useful enterprise; but, unfortunately, the spirit of traffic took that direction in those times which it takes at this day, so far as it deals in stockjobbing and agiotage, and in joint-stock undertakings of delusive remoteness and extent. The most grinding usury followed the most measureless extravagance; boys were bred up from early youth to the mysteries of money-dealing; and Horace ascribes it to his father as matter of especial merit, that he caused him to be instructed, not in usurious calculations, but in liberal arts after the Greek model.* The length which usury went may be conjectured, from the circumstance that one of the most famous of the wholesale dealers in this line received an interest on his loans monthly, which, in twenty months, amounted to an equal sum with the capital. It seems, therefore, that usury offered the easiest means of amassing wealth; for the patronage of the great could only be earned by painful and irksome services; and even a man like Horace, in his intimate friendship with Mæcenas, was exposed to the contumelies of those who thought their birth an exclusive title to the humiliating privilege of domestic attendance on greatness. Even Horace himself remained long at a humble distance, made as if he scarce durst open his lips at his first audience, acknowledges that he only received a laconic and lofty answer, and that it was nine months before the great man honoured him with his notice. The importance still attached to birth and family must, however, be viewed as

* "Noluit in Flavī ludum me mittere; magni
Quo pueri, magnis e centurionibus orti,
Lævo suspensi loculos tabulamque lacerto,
Ibant, octonis referentes Idibus æra."

Serm. lib. i. Sat. vi. v. 72.

a relic of less servile times. After the accession of Tiberius, old nobility was no longer fawned upon, but homage was transferred wherever chance had transferred wealth or power.

The consequence of this altered state of things, as regarded the richer class, was a general tedium of life, and passion for variety. The taste for travel, so prevalent in modern times, became general, from a feeling of discontent with home, and disgust of ordinary impressions.* Instead of state affairs, as in former times, the pleasures of the table and the cares of the kitchen now supplied the only topics of polite conversation.

We shall have occasion to observe, with regard to Roman cookery, that, from Augustus to Vitellius, and from the reign of the latter emperor down to that of Heliogabalus, prodigious advances were made in this department of human knowledge. Horace has many happy traits of humour on the fashionable dainties of his own times; he does due honour to mosses grown in meadows, fowl stewed in Falernian wine, mussels and oysters from the Lucrine lake and Circeian promontory, black-game from the Umbrian forests, &c. &c. But he ridicules with justice, in his second satire, the rarity which alone recommended roast peacock, of which the flesh was no less tough than its plumage was diversified; the notion that an enormous pike was better than one of middling size, and that the taste of the fish would indicate the spot where it was caught. It would seem, he says, as if every cheap article of food, however palatable, were banished from the table of our great lords (*regum*), excepting that a corner is left for humble eggs and olives.†

Under Tiberius, on the gradual extinction of all public life, when military rule and sombre constraint drove

* "Quid tibi visa Chios, Bullati, notaque Lesbos?
Quid concipna Samos? quid Cræsi regia Sardis?"

Horat. Epist. lib. i. Ep. xi.

† "—— Necdum omnis abacta
Pauperies epulis regum; nam vilibus ovis
Nigrisque est oleis hodie locus."

Horat. Scrm. lib. ii. Sat. ii. v. 44.

men to sensual pleasures, commenced that species of systematic excess depicted by the satirists who flourished in the subsequent period. In the earlier and better part of his reign, Tiberius vainly endeavoured to set bounds to the spreading rage for indulgence; but, considering the mode of life to which he became himself addicted at an age to which the tyranny of passion seldom extends, no very happy result could be expected from his censorial efforts. In fact, it was impossible for mere precepts and edicts to alter the bias once given to the Roman life by manifold causes. How could mere regulations effect any thing in times when it had come to this,—that ladies of easy virtue, in order to evade the legal penalties for their conduct, formally enrolled their names in the lists of licensed prostitutes?—when youths of the two superior orders purposely committed offences to which the punishment annexed was loss of honour as citizens, that they might figure with impunity as actors or as gladiators?

Even under Augustus, the old religion had been brought into contempt with the old manners. The Egyptian, and especially the Jewish religion, had gained so many adherents, that Horace repeatedly jests at the taste for Judaism; and the Jewish sabbath was observed very extensively, though not quite with Judaical preciseness.* Under Tiberius, foreign ceremonies and doctrines spread so generally, that the jealous emperor ordered the Jewish and Egyptian sacerdotal vestments, which were found in Rome, to be taken away and burnt, despatched the able-bodied proselytes (4000 in number) to Sardinia, or to more distant regions, as soldiers, and expelled the Jews in a body from the city.

Many minor arrangements for the convenience of life remained in a backward state under Augustus and Tiberius. In particular, the travelling comforts of great men like Mæcenas appear to have been indifferently provided for in Italy. Miry roads, wretched fare, and still more wretched lodging, appear to have been of no

* Sueton. in Tiberio, c. 31. 36. See also Casaubon's note to c. 31.

rare occurrence on a journey; and Mæcenas, whose arrival in Fundi, as related by Horace, was a highly important event for the chief magistrate of that little town, was often forced to content himself with sleeping quarters such as the modern traveller would scarce find anywhere but in Spain. Accordingly, the later emperors hit upon a plan for stopping nowhere on a journey but at their own houses or mansions. This arrangement was already carried so far in the days of Titus, that the stages from Rome to the most remote parts were marked by imperial mansions, which the neighbouring inhabitants were bound on occasion to supply with all necessary articles.* The contributions levied in this way soon became at least as burdensome as the *liberæ legationes* had been in the republican times.

* “Litteræ mittebantur de instruendis mansionibus, de invectione ornamentorum regalium, quæ ingressurum imperatorem significarent.”

CHAP. VI.

SCIENCE AND LITERATURE IN THE AUGUSTAN AGE.

THE state of intellectual and literary culture, shortly before the contests between Cæsar and Pompey, and the direction given by Cicero to the mind of his own and future times, have been described in a preceding part of our history.

In the latter times of the republic a closer acquaintance took place with Alexandria, and the schools which flourished in that city. Literature, in Rome as in Alexandria, became a mere artificial want of fashionable life, in such circles as those of Mæcenas, Messala, Asinius Pollio, and others. It cannot be denied that this was of service, in a certain point of view, to Roman literature: and that the leading men of that age did themselves no less honour by the encouragement of letters and science, than was earned by Louis XIV. in times nearer our own. However, Roman literature thereby contracted a tincture somewhat similar to that which distinguished the age of Louis XIV. Cicero already found occasion to deride the taste of the literary coteries of his times, in which the later corrupted productions of Greek literature were extolled to the skies, and a sentimental flow of words passed current for feeling and poetry. Under Augustus, this style came still more into fashion. Tiberius was brought up in the same taste, and took much delight in mythic tales, and in extraordinary Græco-oriental dreams of primitive history. He was in the habit of proposing to the grammarians whom he kept about him as table companions and toad-eaters, such questions as the following: "Who was the mother of Hecuba?" "What was the name of Achilles while he stayed among the

virgins at Scyros?" "What tunes did the Syrens sing?" &c.

Virgil's earliest friend and protector, the accomplished Asinius Pollio, devoted his mind wholly to the sciences, when he saw the aristocracy lost irrecoverably. He held lectures in person, assisted the exercises of younger friends, and sought success, as a writer, in the most various departments. He anticipated Augustus in the establishment of a public library, restored a wing in the temple of Freedom, and placed a second library there, which he adorned with works of art. Augustus followed his example. In the neighbourhood of the temple of Apollo, which he had built on the Palatine, he erected a hall, in which was placed a Greek and Latin library*, which is often mentioned, like that in Alexandria, as a sort of academy. He established a second library in the building entitled the Hall of Octavia. From the rules laid down by Vitruvius † for the building of private and public libraries, it is evident that, in the times of Augustus, a library was regarded as no less indispensable in a great house than a bath-room; and that a public building of that description was held equally necessary in large towns with courts of justice, and other such institutions.

The transplantation of Greek science to Roman soil was not undertaken merely as an abstract amusement of speculative minds, but as a practical occupation of life, and a ready way of advancement. The division of the day by hours had been adopted but of late from the Greeks, as also had been the use of dials and water-clocks. Greek astronomers from Alexandria reformed the Roman calendar, under the directions of Cæsar. The case was the same with the various branches of practical mathematics, and especially with architectural science.

* Sueton. Octav. cap. xxix.

† Vitruvius, in the 4th (or 7th) chapter of his 6th book, treats of private libraries, as to how they should be lighted, and how the books should be protected from damp. In the 5th (or 8th) chapter are the following expressions: — "*Præterea bibliothecæ, pinacothecæ, basilicæ non dissimili modo quam publicorum operum magnificentia comparata, quod,*" &c.

Vitruvius names but a few Roman with dozens of Greek architects. The case too was the same with medical science. Even in the times of Cato the Elder, Greek medical practice came into vogue, though the stern old Roman maintained that it was better to keep foreign physicians at a distance, as Rome had done without them for centuries, yet had not wanted the art of healing.* A medical school was established at Rome, in which the teachers were mostly Greeks. Even in the imperial times, this science remained in the hands of Greeks, though Augustus persuaded Antonius Musa, his celebrated body physician, to write on the subject in Latin.

Geography, the whole range of statistical and ethnographical science, remained the property of the Greeks, who, in the Augustan age, laboured to erect a complete structure of mathematical and historical geography. Strabo, of whose works only the seventeen books of geography have come down to us, combines the merit of Grecian accomplishments with those advantages which only such times as those of which we are treating could have afforded him, and displays an accurate acquaintance with all that was known of the ancient world, a clear conception of what a work such as he undertook ought to be, and total exemption from any proneness to marvellous narrations.

In turning our view to the works of elegant literature, it must first be remarked, that in these times, as at every period when poetry and science have been a pastime and toy of fastidious indolence, some displayed a rage no less irrational for Greek frivolities† than others for old Italian and Roman literary relies. As the taste of the refined circles gave the tone to works of literature, not the national demand, nor the natural

* "Fuisse sine medicis, nec tamen sine medicinâ."

† "Atque ego, cum Græcos facerem, natus mare citra,
Versiculos; vetuit me tali voce Quirinus,
Post median noctem visus, cum somnia vera;
In silvam non ligna feras insanias, ac si
Magnas Græcorum malis implere catervas."

Horat. Sermon. lib. i. Sat. x. v. 31.

taste of writers themselves, most of the Roman poets took the latter Greeks as their models. Catullus was distinguished by his contemporaries, in the sense of eulogy, by the addition of *the learned poet*; and was justly regarded as having introduced into the Latin language the erudite refinements of Callimachus and others. Propertius, in his elegies, seems to move somewhat more freely; nevertheless, he has always Grecian models before his eyes, as well in the whole composition of his elegies, as in single passages; and Tibullus, who, more than any other poet of antiquity, betrays the modern tendency to sentimental melancholy, might probably, were all the Grecian works of poetry extant which were in those times studied by the Romans, be detected in making copies and centos of various, especially later, Greek poets. This is true not of particular passages only, which have been remarked by critics, but of the whole manner and character of his writings.

We leave the mention of minor poets to literary history, and pass to the three best known, and most read, of the Roman poets:—Ovid, Horace, and Virgil.

During the life of Ovid, those of his works on which posterity has placed the least value—his complaints about his banishment from the capital, and the melancholy descriptions of his exile on the banks of the Danube, were those which were the most read. The morbid and effeminate refinement of the age—the idea entertained by the spoilt children of the capital, that life out of Rome hardly deserved the name—the deficiency in natural taste and feeling, which can only describe even genuine grief in artificial language, characterise the “*Tristia*” in a degree revolting to manlier ears, but grateful to those who found in it the expression of their own feelings, as well as the excitement and satisfaction of their own curiosity.

In the circles from which Ovid bewailed his exile, he had found favour as a light, agreeable, and witty poet, very much on a similar footing to that of Gresset

and many of the lighter class of French poets. It was not until far later times that he rose to higher consideration. In the middle ages Ovid was the most read of the Latin poets till Virgil was restored by Dante and Petrarch to the rank which belonged to him; and even then Ovid still maintained his place in the schools. In the era of revival of the study of antiquity, Ovid's "Art of Love," and his "Remedies of Love," were found quite as congenial to Italian polished society as they had been in the times of Augustus and Tiberius; were easier understood and higher valued by the many, than works produced by deeper meditation and feeling, and displaying greater art, elaboration, and knowledge. His heroic epistles are a production, as might be supposed, of mere school-learning, put together with pleasing rhetorical artifice; their charm must be attributed to the pleasure of seeing knotty poetical problems well and wittily solved. The "Fasti" are a work of more importance than would be imagined on a superficial view, as giving, in the familiar garb of light versification, a complete view of the connection of Roman state-religion and history with daily life. They show us how in ancient Rome every citizen of the republic was reminded in every public amusement and festal rite of the national history; how the forms of worship were linked with the duties of patriotism. Ovid himself claims for his work the merit of giving the old traditions a new dress, freshening their remembrance, and rendering no unimportant service to the new imperial family, by connecting their names with those already hallowed by tradition, with the oldest festal rites and historical records of the Roman people, by verses in the mouths of every one.* The "Metamorphoses," a species of epic, made up of mytho-

* " Sacra recognosces annalibus cruta priscis,
 Et quo sit merito quæque notata dies.
 Invenies illic et festa domestica vobis,
 Sæpe tibi pater est, sæpe legendus avus.
 Quoque ferunt illi pietos signantia fastos,
 Tu quoque cum Druso præmia fratre feres."

logical narratives, strung together only by the slenderest thread, had no great popularity with the contemporaries of the poet; but has exercised a highly important influence on the arts and cultivation of more recent times, extending from the fall of the Roman empire to the middle of the eighteenth century.

The odes of Horace are composed for the most part upon Greek models. He often reproduces in Latin whole pieces of Greek poetry, and the Greek origin of his odes has sufficiently been shown by the labours of his scholiasts and annotators. Horace, unlike Catullus and Propertius, who were imitators mostly of the later poets, kept the elder Greeks, fraught with the genuine inspiration, before his eyes, and performed for the higher poetry what Cicero had already done for the poetry and eloquence of Greece. Horace himself felt his pinions unequal to the higher lyric flights in a prosaic age; hence he does not seek to imitate the boldness of Pindar*, but communicates lessons of exalted wisdom, equally removed from the asperity of the blunt stoic as from the enervate sensuality of the school of Epicurus in Rome, in his own and in the subsequent times.

If, in his odes, Horace has anxiously followed the footsteps of the Greeks, he has on the other hand created a species of poetry entirely his own, essentially distinct from the bitter character of Greek satire. He has struck out a path betwixt prose and poetry, which none have ventured to tread after him, and has fitted to that end the negligent beauties, the measure and the cadence of his verse. His satires and epistles converse with external and internal life, delineate man and human nature, and, while seeming to teach only the arts of luxurious living and courtly flattery, gently guide to a self-dependent life, adorned with arts and sciences. In

* "Pindarum quisquis studet æmulari,
Iule, ceratis ope Dædaleâ
Nititur pennis, vitreo daturus
Nomina ponto."

his own and in every subsequent age in which the social relations have reached the highest and most diversified stage of advancement, Horace has ever been the manual of statesmen and of all those persons who have sought enhanced enjoyment of life in the genuine pleasures of science.

Virgil's influence is far more comprehensive and general in its character ; so momentous indeed to the whole of Roman literature, that it might almost be said that Roman poetry received no less injury from undiscerning admiration and imitations of Virgil, than Roman eloquence from a similar worship of Cicero. Even the first attempts of Virgil indeed evidenced a mastery of the language and of the music of Latin versification such as none other could boast, before or since. The idyllic form, however, which he selected was an unsuitable one. He selected it, if we are to believe his elder critics and commentators, not of his own impulse, but by counsel of Pollio, who ever preferred the artificial to the natural. His manner was the more incongruous with this form of composition, in that he does not delineate an ideal and pastoral mode of existence, like Gessner, but merely follows nature and Theocritus. He followed shrewd guides. The Sicilian poet had his Doric dialect at command, and was under no necessity to imitate the language of the fashionable world, and the easy flow of diction of a public spoilt by rhetorical models. Amidst the ornate polish and artificial rhythm of Roman poetry, the contrast between substance and form could not but be sensible ; it was however readily overlooked in admiration of the adroitness with which Virgil, after the example of his prototype, insinuated compliments to his patrons and protectors.

The Georgics are the triumph of the art of Virgil. He succeeded in giving life and animation to didactic poetry, of which the very idea involves something of a prosaic character ; and composed a truly national poem, having chosen as his subject the ancient Roman man-

ner of life, and the single art, besides that of war, that was really loved and valued by the Romans and Sabines. By this poem, a generation far removed from nature and its pure enjoyments were guided back to the memory of the old manner of life ; and that life embellished by all charms of description compatible with studied simplicity. The magic of versification, the inimitable melodies for which our vocal organs have no tone, and our ear no sensibility, but which animated and entranced a Dante and Petrarch, are here all in their place ; here, in a congenial Roman element, the movement is easy ; art appears throughout, artifice nowhere.

If in Virgil's heroic work, the "Æneid," any such object had been aimed at as to emulate or to equal Homer, the aim would have been all but ludicrous in times so far remote from heroic. His real scope was a new modification of the epos, adapted to the age when he lived. In that epic form in which description and vivid setting forth of his subject often take the place of tranquil narrative, and in which the poet visibly stands forth amidst his own creations, Apollonius of Rhodes had preceded Virgil ; from the former, therefore, who had already modified Homeric forms to the tone of his monarchical times, Virgil borrowed whole situations and pictures. Virgil, however, totally eclipsed his cold artificial prototype, by clothing in Greek forms matter essentially Roman ; familiarising to all men's mouths their country's early legends and history, and diffusing over his whole work a genuine national interest.

The poets of the times immediately subsequent to the Virgilian era, of whom we shall name but one or two, evinced, by the very choice of their subjects, that nature and poetry had become in a manner out of the question in the mere superfetation of books and libraries. The public libraries, as we learn from Ovid, even under Augustus, being subjected to strict police inspection, whatever was energetic or in the spirit of the olden time, was indifferently encouraged, while, on the other

hand, the harmless diversities of sportive or erudite literature were conspicuously promoted.

Of the names distinguished in these branches of literature, amongst others must be mentioned that of Phædrus, who wrote in the time of Claudius, and is unique in his way. The species of fable which Phædrus contrived to render attractive to polished society, by wit, finesse, prettiness, and terseness of expression, was raised by La Fontaine in similar times, those of Louis XIV., to a station equal with that bestowed by Phædrus on the transformed Æsopian fable*, in the ranks of Roman literature. The pure Latinity of Phædrus, his facile flow of verse, his epigrammatic succinctness, his minor moralities, fitted so nicely to social intercourse, could hardly miss to make him as great a favourite in an age of refinement, as La Fontaine for his sly simplicity.

Since Cæsar's time a wholly new description of literature came into vogue, since the Oscan and Atellan drolleries became so degraded that Tiberius was at length compelled to suppress them wholly by rigid measures.† This new form of diverting productions first took the shape of the so-called *mimes*, and, since the Augustan era, of *pantomimes*, which had never before been seen in Rome. This species of drama, which finally became a mere dumb show, or ballet, maintained its ground, even after the total fall of dramatic art, in the eastern empire, and tended not a little to the destruction of morals. In general these pieces consist of humorous, often indecent fancies, plays upon words, or even saws of morality. In the latter Publius Syrus is especially rich; or rather the greater number of these maxims which have reached

* Seneca, in the reign of Claudius, terms the real Æsopian fable a species of composition unknown to the Romans, or rather uncultivated by them. In the "Consolatio ad Polybium," c. xxvii., he says, "Non audeo te usque eo producere, ut fabellas quoque et Æsopæos logos, intentatum. Romanis ingeniis opus, solitâ tibi venustate connectas; difficile est quidem ut ad hæc hilariora studia tam vehementer percussus animus, tam cito possit occidere; hoc tamen argumentum habeto jam corroborati ejus, et redditi sibi, si poterit se a severioribus scriptis ad hæc salutiora producere."

† Tacit. Annal. lib. iv. c. 14.

our times happen to be his. After previously having made a circuit of all the towns in Italy, he challenged all professed composers of mimes to contest the palm with him. Two other names of celebrity in this description of composition were Mattius and the ill-fated Roman knight Decimus Laberius, whom Cæsar compelled to disgrace himself and his order by a public theatrical appearance.

BOOK V.

THE EMPIRE FROM TIBERIUS TO THE ANTONINES.

CHAP. I.

REIGN OF TIBERIUS.

ON his stepfather's death at Nola, fourteen years U. C. after the birth of Christ, Tiberius assumed the reins of 766. government over the Roman empire, without the interposition of a pause between the death of the late ruler and the accession of the next. Dissimulation, envy, cruelty, formed the leading traits of a character which has been admirably drawn by Dio Cassius as well as by Tacitus. "He never," says the former*, "plainly manifested what was his wish; he never expressed his meaning with explicitness: his words were ever utterly opposed to his real purpose; he ever wholly denied what he wished, and seemed to wish what he abhorred. He stormed on occasions which in reality excited no strong emotion in him; and seemed perfectly tranquil precisely in moments of the most vehement wrath. He expressed the utmost sympathy towards those whom he intended to punish, and the utmost wrath towards those whom he forgave. Those the most hateful to him he often seemed to regard as his trustiest friends; and his best friends he treated as though they were utterly indifferent to him. On the whole, he held that a ruler must never betray his intimate thoughts: as, by so doing, he often may suffer many and great mischiefs, while by the opposite method he may gain many

* Lib. lviii. c. 1.

and great advantages. He was irritated withal when any seemed to have penetrated his character, and caused to be put to death many against whom he had no complaint, except that they had found him out. So that on the one hand it was perilous not to make out his meaning (for many a time and oft it was an offence to attend to what he said instead of to what he meant), while on the other hand, to apprehend him fully was more perilous still, for he suspected those who penetrated his designs of abhorring them. The darkness of this character soon overshadowed the whole empire. Augustus had retained, for the security of his person, only three cohorts of the numerous guards, and a handful of Spaniards, who formed his body guard. Afterwards he dismissed the Spaniards, supplying their place with Germans. After the overthrow of Varus, when all the Germans then in the city received immediate orders to leave it, even the German guard was disbanded, but soon afterwards formed again; and, as it appears, again reinforced with Spaniards and Illyrians.

These precautions were not enough for Tiberius, who could not think himself in safety without a numerous guard; and accordingly drew to the neighbourhood of the city the Prætorians, whom Augustus had distributed throughout Italy.* This measure proved decisive for the destiny of the Roman empire, as from this moment the emperor became dependent on his guards, and the commander of those guards became the second personage in the state. The Roman public, according to Tacitus, were malicious enough to affirm that Augustus had only chosen Tiberius for his successor, in order that the mildness of his own rule might be brought out in the strongest possible contrast by the subsequent tyranny. Impartial eyes will rather see in Tiberius's appointment a mere device of Livia, who also succeeded in moving her husband to require of him the

* Suetonius says (Aug. c. 1.) of Augustus, in this particular, "Neque unquam plures quam tres cohortes in urbe esse passus est, easque sine castris; reliquas in hiberna et æstiva circa finitima oppida dimittere assueverat."

adoption of the son of Drusus, named Germanicus, although he had himself a son and heir.

Tiberius began his reign with the murder of his benefactor's unfortunate grandson, Agrippa Posthumus; and continued it for some time with hypocrisy and dissimulation too gross to pass current with any one. However, while Germanicus remained at his side, he felt compelled to keep his natural character within certain bounds. His whole efforts were therefore employed to effect the removal of his rival from the head of the eight legions, where Augustus had placed him, and from the war, which he conducted with distinguished honour in Germany. Removed from the army of the Rhine, Germanicus was sent to Armenia, and finally put out of the way, as was supposed, by poison.

The general course of administration continued mild and equitable, notwithstanding several instances of capital charges and executions, till the ninth year of the government of Tiberius, which Tacitus assigns as the epoch at which began the influence of Sejanus, and at which the Prætorian guard was encamped in the neighbourhood of the city. The family of Sejanus was of equestrian rank, and sprung from Volsinii. His father, in the days of Augustus, had held command of the guard. The son appears to have captivated the favour of Tiberius by the skill and vigour with which he quelled a revolt of the legions in Pannonia. He had no sooner succeeded to his father's place at the head of the guards, than, under the pretext that the soldiers were in danger of being corrupted in the provincial towns, and in Rome itself, by mixing with the citizens, besides being scattered in case of any emergency, he collected them into a permanent encampment on the Viminal hill, in the neighbourhood of a mound known by the name of *Agger Tarquinii*.

The first years of the reign of Tiberius, even according to the testimony of Tacitus, to whom human actions and characters often seem blacker than they are,

or can be, considering the mediocrity and weakness of the bulk of mankind, were, if not exactly admirable, yet at least deserving of no such charges as those which can with justice be brought against his subsequent government. In general cases the senators, up to this period, could still express with freedom their opinion in the senate ; and in certain cases Tiberius indulged the murmurs of that body, and even gave way to their wishes on particular occasions.* When the base crew composing the majority of the senate pushed adulation too far, Tiberius struggled against the stream. No new public burthens were imposed, but rather the old were lightened. Slaves and freedmen were suffered to have no considerable influence. Tiberius visited those who had visited him ; accepted private feasts and hospitalities ; visited the sick ; attended funerals ; and held discourses in honour of the deceased. Fear of his nephew, and even of his own son, kept the tyrant for some time within bounds ; but after their death, the baseness of the people about him gave him boldness to dare whatever evil lay within the scope of his will or power, and which Sejanus, a ready and able tool, lent himself to execute. A tribe of wretched creatures now assumed the part of informers, and Sejanus, who had consummate skill in stimulating the fears of the tyrant, finally succeeded in persuading him to quit the capital. Another motive of this step was to shroud from public curiosity the ignominious lusts of an advanced age, and to leave the execution of his merciless policy to Sejanus. Of that favourite, Tacitus says, that by every species of artifice he had contrived to attach Tiberius so firmly to him, as to render one impenetrably guarded against others towards him alone incautious and unmuffled.† On the departure of Tiberius that minister remained behind to represent the imperial person. The emperor took along with him a jurisconsult, a sort of minister of justice (the consular senator Cocceius Nerva), and Curtius Atticus, known

* Tacit. *Annal.* lib. ii. c. 33.

† *Annal.* lib. iv. c. 1.

by one of Ovid's elegies being addressed to him. His other attendants, with few exceptions, were Greeks, whose conversation was selected to beguile the time in the intervals of sensual pleasure. He spent some time in a circuit of Campania: till at last he was attracted by the agreeable site of the island of Capræa, which offered a mild climate in winter, as well as in summer a cool retreat. The treasures of the empire were employed to make a delightful residence of this place, which seemed to secure the tyrant against all suspicious approach*; and here Tiberius gave himself up to shameless and unnatural lusts, while his worthy lieutenant Sejanus carried on a series of persecutions against all who stood in any degree of relationship to the reigning family, or excited the suspicions of the tyrant by freedom of speech, independence of position, or popularity of character.

It were needless to enumerate the cruelties which were exercised in Rome and throughout Italy, (for the provinces were exempt from the caprices of the tyrant.) Suffice it to say that the family and nearest relations of Tiberius fell a sacrifice to his suspicions and to the calumnies of Sejanus. The latter surrounded every man of any note with spies, plied the women of the house with seductions and promises, and from Tiberius, whom he kept in effect prisoner, received every possible public demonstration of honour.

Already Sejanus felt himself so powerful that he nourished thoughts of himself usurping the government. Already were his statues set up by the Romans in their private houses, in public places, in temples, along with those of the reigning family, when Tiberius, in an interval of sobriety (he was commonly drunk), either of himself perceived the pass to which matters had come, or was made aware of the real views of Sejanus by his own suit for the hand of an imperial

* "Solitudinem ejus placuisse maxime crediderim, quoniam importuosum circa mare, et vix modicis navigiis pauca subsidia, neque appulerit quisquam nisi gnaro custode."—*Tacit. Annal.* lib. iv. c. 67.

princess, or finally, as Josephus states, was made acquainted with his plans by a billet from Antonia, the widow of his brother Drusus.

The whole demeanour and management of Tiberius, when he had formed the resolution of destroying the man who had hitherto been his all-entrusted confidant and all-powerful minister, is admirably described by Dio Cassius, who has hit off in a few words the description of the part played at that time by Sejanus in the empire. "Sejanus," he says, "in the fulness of his power and exaltation of his pride was so distinguished, that, to express it in a single word, it would seem that he was emperor, and Tiberius only chief of the isle of Capreæ."* Sometimes he affected cordiality, held out hopes of consenting to the proposed matrimonial alliance, and thereby kept the formidable favourite from suddenly putting into execution his plans of usurpation, which would probably have been seconded by the soldiery. Sometimes he pretended mortal sickness; at other times he made as if he would come to Rome without delay; now favoured the creatures of Sejanus, now refused his proposals, and let slip indications of displeasure. Thus he withheld his victim from proceeding to extremities; and even when at last he conferred full powers upon Macro to arrest Sejanus, put him to death, and take his place, it was done so cautiously, that no oriental despot would have proceeded with more subtilty in getting rid of a too powerful vizier. When Macro, after reading in the senate the decree of arrest against Sejanus, next was to put it in execution, the *vigiles* were ordered to do duty for the guards; and the latter received, on this occasion, for the first and for the only time, a donative from Tiberius. Sejanus was enticed into the senate-house by the pretext that Macro was the bearer of a letter to that body, by virtue of which he was to receive the dignity of tribune. Even this letter to the senate was couched in such artificial terms, that Macro,

* Νησιάρχόν τινα εἶναι δοκεῖν. — Dio Cass. Histor. lib. Iviii. c. 6—9.

on the slightest movement in favour of Sejanus, could have left out the concluding part altogether, or given a totally different turn to its import.

The execution of Sejanus, who was succeeded by Macro as præfect of the body guard, was followed by that of his innocent children, relations, and even distant connections. The numerous persons crowded into the prisons as friends of Sejanus were, without any judicial proceeding, massacred *en masse**, and even their bodies subjected to indignities.

A government like that of Tiberius could rest alone upon brute force, that is to say, on the guards and on the soldiery. This was openly recognised in the senate. One of the members of that body, now degraded into a tool of every species of cruelty and violence, thought to flatter Tiberius by making the proposal to assign a place of honour at the public games to the guards, along with the equestrian order. Meanwhile Tiberius, who, at his advanced age, 78, was addicted to intemperance in drinking and the other vices of reckless youth, was visibly approaching his end. However, he attempted to dissemble his condition, affected health and vigour, made excursions in Campania and along the coast, and seemed again to meditate return to Rome. He sank during his journey near the promontory of Misenum, and fell into a deathlike slumber. Caius, the inseparable attendant of his uncle, the companion of his lusts, the grovelling slave of his caprices, who had been as a child the favourite of the Gallic legions under the jesting *soubriquet* of Caligula†, was his declared successor, and was greeted on the instant with the homage of Macro and of the whole court. But now came the astounding news that Tiberius yet breathed, and had called for food. Caius was lost, if a rapid decision were not taken. Macro's counsel prevailed, and the old tyrant was smothered under his pillows.

* “ Inritatusque (Tiberius) suppliciiis cunctos qui carcere attinebantur, accusati societatis cum Sejano, necari jubet eet.”

† He had received from the soldiers the surname of Caligula in jest (caestrensi joco), because he had been brought up amongst them in the garb of the camp (manipulario habitu).

U. C.

790.

A. D.

37.

CHAP. II.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF CALIGULA TO THE ACCESSION OF
VESPASIAN.

THE first weeks and months of the new reign, like the beginnings of so many reigns, were wholly opposite to the preceding. A stop was put to the course of cruel measures and of penal proceedings: but two things might have served to indicate, even from the outset, that the new ruler scarcely would be better than the old one. First, he cancelled the will of Tiberius, in order to exclude his grandson from that share in the government which was assigned to him by that instrument. Secondly, he showed an ardent passion for sports and spectacles, expended immense sums on those objects, and thus threw away the sole advantage conferred upon the empire by Tiberius, through his frugal disposition and strict superintendence of the finances. Caius, according to Suetonius, dissipated in one year the enormous hoards amassed by his predecessor. Even during the life of that predecessor, all reflecting men had foreboded the worst of the next reign, from the recreation alternately found by the future successor to empire in the song, the dance, and the sights of executions and of tortures. These forebodings were only too soon justified by his conduct as emperor. From the very first he ran into the most senseless extravagance, in giving entertainments to the people, to the knights, to the senate, and exhibiting shows, wild beast baitings, sea fights, and races, in Rome, from morning to night. He built a bridge over the bay of *Baiæ*, for no earthly purpose, the length of which exceeded three and a half Roman miles, and which was strewed with gravel and paved with stone in the manner of the Appian way. Moreover, he caused

splendid public amusements and festivities to be held in Lyons and Syracuse at his expense. Montesquieu shows, incidentally, that the relief which was apparently given to the people under the reign of Caligula, by taking off the tax of the twentieth penny on the sale of goods, was indeed only apparent, and was shifted from one class on another. The publication of the resources and exigencies of the state, which had been commenced and interrupted under Tiberius, was quite useless, as Caius nevertheless pursued his senseless course of extravagance. Corrupted in his very childhood; sunken deeper still in his youth; as a ruler, utterly lost in senseless projects, boundless extravagances, sports, and unbridled debaucheries; the longer Caius reigned, the blinder obedience was paid his caprices, the more utterly he lost all command of understanding. It cannot, therefore, be worth while to enumerate the individual acts of government under an emperor who was all but a maniac. The most remarkable circumstance is, that such a ruler could hold sway over the whole of the Roman world during four years; and that even after the lapse of that time no one would have risen against him, if he had not outraged at last, in his madness, the very tools of his tyranny. At his accession, indeed, he had restored independence to the tribunals; but it was not long before he assumed a criminal jurisdiction, and enacted it in person in the most revolting manner: this too not only in Rome, but in Gaul, and on the Rhine, whither one of his fits of craziness had carried him.

The caprices and cruelties incident to the government of a madman might have been transient, had not Caligula and his instruments unfortunately brought them into connection with the public administration, and with the ways and means of oppression which served as a model to his successors, when once the example had been given of measureless extravagance, and donatives to the soldiery and the people. Murder became a matter of calculation, not an indulgence of cruelty—a compendious method of sweeping the wealth of the

murdered into the treasury. Accordingly, when the wealth of Junius Pennus, one of Caligula's victims, proved not so considerable as he had expected, he exclaimed: "That man has cheated me; he might as well have lived." Even those whom he mocked with his forgiveness, he plunged in distress and wretchedness; while he snatched from those whom he threatened with death, the last resource by which they might hitherto have secured their possessions to their posterity. Suicide had hitherto been a method of evading confiscations of property. Caligula annulled this mournful privilege; and his successors took very good care not to restore it to the family of the suicide. Besides, he not only held sales, at which he was himself present, and forced his wares and furniture at the most exorbitant prices on wealthy individuals, senators, and even Gallic provincials, but on the days on which it was customary at Rome to give presents, demanded of the terrified citizens gifts for himself, and constrained them to lay their money and jewels at his feet. As the public games, which were held with mad profusion, had drained the public treasury to its last ebb, he forced private individuals to hold them at their own charge; and compelled the rich, unless they wished the destruction of their relatives, to make him large bequests in their testaments. Even the contractors for improving public roads in Italy, and the government commissioners who presided over that department (*curatores viarum*), were ruined by capricious exactions; and on this occasion, as on so many others, it appeared that the most ruthless tyrants every where with the utmost ease find men, who not only are ready to be employed as their servants and instruments, but even to anticipate their orders.

A league was at length formed against Caligula, not dissimilar to that which despatched the Russian emperor Paul. The only names delivered down to us are those of Cassius Chærea and Cornelius Sabinus, the actual instruments in this conspiracy. The prime

movers cunningly kept in the background, and accordingly escaped with their lives ; while certain innocent persons, who came in the way by mere chance, were murdered by the German guard of the emperor. The first personages in Caius's court, the consuls of the year, several former prætors and consuls, Valerius Asiaticus, one of the most opulent proprietors in the south of France, and who had enjoyed an eminent place in the emperor's favour, had knowledge of the conspiracy and hopes of saving the state by the murder of the tyrant. The execution was assigned to Chærea and Sabinus, as the tyrant had affronted the honour of both, while he employed their services daily as the instruments of his cruelties. We further learn from Seneca, that the death of the tyrant seemed to a part of the senate indispensable, as the city was threatened with a famine, ominous of destruction to thousands.

After the murder of Caius, the consuls thought they A. D. must crown their work. They convoked the senate in 41. the capitol, resolved on the restoration of the republic, and had already gained a part of the soldiers in favour of this new republic. But, by this time, the soldiers of the guard had ferreted out the imbecile Claudius, a brother of Germanicus and uncle of the murdered emperor, and offered the imperial dignity to him. At first he endeavoured to escape from them, and sent excuses to the senate, saying that he was detained by force by the soldiers in their quarters. But soon being encouraged by his friends, he promised a considerable donative, not only to the guards but to the whole army, on condition of their raising and maintaining him on the throne. The amount of the present which was promised to each individual soldier, according to Josephus, as well as Suetonius, seems exaggerated. The example, however, once having been given, no emperor ascended the throne, since Claudius, without exhausting the public treasures by lavish donatives to the soldiery. The Jewish prince Agrippa, whom the senate had sent to Claudius to negotiate, confirmed the

imbecile prince in the intention of maintaining his station; and as the people also, accustomed as it was to games and donatives, desired a monarch, the senate on the third day was compelled to recognise the emperor whom the soldiery had elected by acclamation.

The commencement of his reign was in a similar style to that of Caius. All the cruelties and caprices of his predecessor were disavowed, imposts repealed, bribes prohibited, exiles recalled, proceedings quashed on charges of high treason. But all this was only for the moment; and even in the first year, this government combined all the evils incident to the sway of a merciless imbecile, with the rigour of a military—the cabals of a female government—and the caprices of a cabinet which was guided by people without birth, character, or principles. The military nature of the government of Claudius was manifested, first, in the manner in which he attained the imperial dignity, and ever afterwards in the manner in which, spite of the public scorn, he maintained his ground against the hatred of the people and the senate. Of the female domination during this reign we shall have to speak more particularly in the sequel, as the different epochs of his government, and the history of his successor, are closely connected with the career of the two women who ruled him.

The eunuch Posides was his first object of preference. Felix, another of the freedmen who were favoured by him, was made governor of Judea, and loaded with honours. Callistus, already powerful under Caligula, became under Claudius still more powerful and wealthy, so that the most respected men of the first families were forced to give him precedence.

Three of the freedmen favoured by Claudius above all deserve notice, as having governed the empire under him, and in part under his successor,—Polybius, Narcissus, and Pallas. These three divided amongst themselves the departments of public business. One of them was the inseparable attendant of the absurd old

man in his antiquarian studies, in which he was incessantly occupied. Another was at once his private secretary and secretary of state: a third had entire control of the financial department.

The importance of Polybius is chiefly known to us from a letter of condolence which Seneca, who was then living in banishment, addressed to him, and in which he showers such despicable flattery on him and Claudius, that this one document must inspire the most supreme contempt for a philosopher and man of letters, capable of so abusing his talents and acquirements, as well as a vast notion of the favourite's power and influence.

The two wives of Claudius, Messalina and Agrippina, have been exhibited by poets and historians to posterity as a terrifying example of the most abandoned profligacy. Messalina's conduct however was guided by lust, more than ambition; and the cruelties to which, in league with the freedmen, she incited her husband, were prompted for the most part by her own boundless debaucheries. Claudius is represented by Suetonius as naturally cruel; and for the most part, he was moved, like a child or idiot, by some sudden panic, to give his assent to the acts of murder constantly required of him. It deserves to be recorded, that, amongst the victims of these cruelties, have been handed down the names of several men, and of one female, who well may be deemed worthy of better, nay, of the best times. Appius Silanus had courage to give public marks of his abhorrence of the unnatural excesses of Messalina. Arria, whose husband, the senator Pætus, had taken part in one of the innumerable conspiracies of this reign, set him an undaunted example of voluntary death. Valerius Asiaticus, whom Messalina had devoted to death for the sake of the gardens of Lucullus, which he had extended and beautified, made by the noble manliness of his defence a deep impression even upon her and the stupid emperor. His eloquence however could not rescue him from the doom of death.

While even the capital thus presented relics of the old Roman character, on all the frontiers the armies maintained their established superiority. Parthians and Armenians were compelled to receive commands from Rome, and Claudius himself made a short expedition to Britain, to reap the harvest of glory which his generals had sown.

The character of Roman greatness was also maintained by the public works commenced and executed under the reign of Claudius. An aqueduct begun under the former reign was completed, and neighbouring springs, by the name of *Aqua Claudia*, were converted to the use of the city. In like manner the brook Anio was conducted to Rome by a stone channel; the theatre of Pompey, after having been burnt down was rebuilt, and the opening of it solemnised by the celebration of splendid games. But the reign of Claudius was distinguished especially by two undertakings. These were, first, the draining of the lake Fucinus (*Lago di Celano*), which had often been proposed, but always negatived by Augustus, as an enterprise too arduous; and, secondly, the excavation and construction of a harbour at Ostia, with a lighthouse for the security of navigation, after the model of the Pharos at Alexandria; a work which Julius Cæsar, on account of its expensiveness, had never accomplished, however inclined to attempt it. The canal (*emissarium*), dug to draw off the waters of the lake, and thereby drain a considerable tract, was carried through a hill by a tunnel half a league in length; and the labour of thirty thousand men was bestowed on it for eleven years.

While Claudius lavished the treasures of the empire on buildings and on monuments which a wiser prince would never have undertaken, Messalina conspired with the freedmen to put every one to death whose habits did not chime in with her own, or whose wealth she wished to appropriate, till at length she caused Polybius himself to be executed. The ease with which she compassed the downfall of her husband's confiden-

tial fellow student aroused the apprehensions of the three other freedmen, who had hitherto been content to share her empire over Claudius. Accordingly, lest they might also share the destiny of their colleague, they determined to anticipate the empress ; and Messalina herself gave them an opportunity of bringing into play against her the excitable fears of Claudius, of which she had so often taken advantage against others. She no longer contented herself with pushing disregard of all propriety and dignity so far as to prostitute herself, with women of the lowest class, to the lusts of the first comer ; but at last, while her husband was absent for a short time from the capital, she solemnised regular nuptials there with a youth of respectable family, who was at that time consul elect. C. Silius, the new spouse of Messalina, who read his own fate in that of all who had before spurned the abandoned woman's favours, durst not refuse a leading part in this melancholy farce ; and the authorities of the town, the priests and auspices, nay, the gods themselves, were called to witness the nuptials of the empress with the consul elect, without the slightest rumour having reached the ears of Claudius, who might have remained for ever ignorant of the festive celebration, had not Callistus, Narcissus, and Pallas taken advantage of the opportunity to rid themselves of the power of Messalina. By artfully exciting and fomenting the terrors of Claudius, his commands for the death of his wife were extorted, and put in execution. Without a wife, however, the weak monarch could not exist : having long been inured to let himself be blindly led by a woman. Every thing therefore seemed to turn on the union of the freedmen in the selection of a spouse for their emperor. Unluckily they could not agree. A second Agrippina, niece of Claudius, the daughter of his brother Germanicus, intruded herself upon her uncle ; and Narcissus, who dreaded her dispositions, vainly sought, by appealing to the paternal love of Claudius, to induce him to choose another wife, and to dissuade him from espousing a widow,

who would bring into his family a son by her first marriage; while Claudius himself had offspring of his first marriage, a son and daughter. Agrippina, from the moment of her accession to the throne, devoted all her efforts to procure for her son the succession to the empire, (in place of the young Britannicus, son of Claudius,) and to marry him to the emperor's daughter, Octavia. She obtained her end without much trouble. Seneca, the most eminent philosopher of his times, in concert with Burrhus, a man who put in practical operation what his instructor only knew and taught theoretically, helped Agrippina to pave the way to empire for a tyrant. Her first husband, Domitius Ahenobarbus, had been notorious for extravagance, debauchery, and cruelty: Agrippina herself was endowed with all the vices of which a woman is capable; and her husband had avowed that from such a marriage only monsters could spring.

NERO, the offspring of this marriage, had risen to boyhood without any sort of superintendence. His father's heritage had not even descended to him. A dancer and a barber had been his tutors and companions up to his twelfth year, in the house of his aunt Lepida. No sooner was Agrippina married to Claudius than she contrived to get Seneca the philosopher admitted to the prætorship, and appointed as head tutor to her son. Lucius Silanus had been destined for the husband of the emperor's daughter Octavia; but, so soon as Agrippina had entrapped the feeble Claudius in her toils, the intended son-in-law was supplanted, and thenceforth felt himself doomed to destruction. He therefore put an end to himself on Agrippina's marriage day. Nero was adopted as a son immediately afterwards, and married to Octavia; while Britannicus sank down from the first to the second station at court. Agrippina herself showed, from this time, openly, that she aimed at quite another sort of empire than had already been enjoyed by Messalina. At a military festival, when the captives from Britain, and amongst them Carac-

tacus, were brought forward in public, Agrippina, in the view of the whole multitude, took her seat upon an elevated throne beside the emperor, and received equally with himself the homage of the Britons.

The marriage of Octavia with Nero gave fresh aliment to the pride of Agrippina. Burrhus superseded, in the chief command of the guards, the officers of the times of Messalina. Narcissus alone maintained his influence over the old emperor, and assumed to protect the children of Messalina from the arts of their step-mother. Claudius was capable, at any moment, of giving orders for Agrippina's death, as he had for Messalina's. She determined to anticipate him therefore, and the more so, as she hoped to rule with freer and more absolute sway in the name of her son. Poisoning is the native art of Italy. A female monster, Locusta, who had been legally convicted of the most atrocious murders by these means, had nevertheless been spared for occasions of this sort, in which the use of force seemed unadvisable. Agrippina now made use of this artist to put her husband out of the way; and it is stated, not without plausible grounds, by some writers, that Nero had guilty knowledge of the deed.

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After the death of Claudius Britannicus was no more thought of. Nero alone was led by Burrhus to the division of the guard which was just then on duty, and from thence to the Prætorian camp. The empire was purchased from the guards with the same sum which had before been given by Claudius; and which, from thenceforwards, was in some measure a tax. The new reign, from the very first, was bloody; and would have been yet more so, had not Agrippina been kept in check by Burrhus and by Seneca. Nero himself could not save Narcissus, though he would gladly have done so; and the brother of that Silanus who had formerly, as the betrothed of Octavia, been driven to self-murder, was executed. The neglect of the young emperor's education was betrayed by his very first speech in the senate; the more strikingly, as, in ancient times, even

under a monarchy, all that is now transacted in writing was done orally. All the predecessors of Nero, not excepting the idiot Claudius, had themselves composed their addresses to the senate; and Nero was the first who provoked ridicule by delivering the artificial periods and philosophy of Seneca in an oration learnt by rote. Not that the young emperor was devoid of all accomplishments; but he had not got exactly the right ones. His lively spirit had disdained the study of dialectics and rhetoric, from which he might have learned to express himself freely, and to speak in public, and had turned to other things. In painting, sculpture, singing, driving, riding, he was no mean proficient; and in versifying he gave proofs of having received scholastic training.

It was impossible that mother and son should long live upon good terms. Both were eager to reign alone; and both, besides, were surrounded by people whose maxims of conduct were totally opposed to those of each other. Agrippina, namely, was guided by Pallas; while Nero gave ear to Burrhus and Seneca, so long at least as he needed their assistance.

As Agrippina ventured no equivocal indications of drawing forth Britannicus from the background, his death appeared a necessary crime, a measure of state policy. The circumstances of the murder were horrible. Britannicus was poisoned at table, under the eyes of the emperor and his guests; and the poison worked so rapidly that he instantly felt dead on tasting it.

From this moment Agrippina's influence was at an end. She was deprived of the guard of German and Roman soldiers, hitherto assigned to her; and forced to quit the palace. The empress-mother, hitherto accustomed to a splendid cortège, found herself at once forsaken by all. Her pride was so sensibly wounded, her wrath so excited, that Nero thought nothing but her death could secure his government. Burrhus and Seneca shrunk back from the deed of horror: the former, even after its commission was resolved upon,

firmly refused the services of the guard under his command. Anicetus, however, one of the freedmen in Nero's confidence, answered at once for the execution, and was nowise embarrassed in finding instruments. Against poison Agrippina was on her guard; open force could not be employed against her in the capital: the celebration of the feast of Minerva was therefore made use of to inveigle her to Baiaë, under the pretext of a reconciliation with her son. There she was at first received with distinction; and thence she was to be taken back to her country seat by water. The vessel was so contrived as to fall to pieces and sink at a given signal. The plot failed; Agrippina was saved from drowning; but murdered in a horrible manner immediately on landing.

Nero's wife, the unfortunate Octavia, even had her union with him been more than a merely political marriage, after her brother's murder, followed by that of the emperor's own mother, could hardly have continued united with him. She had, besides, long been supplanted by a rival, in the person of Poppæa Sabina, who yielded nothing in effrontery even to common strumpets; and never rested till Octavia, after having been hunted down with the most humiliating indignities, unjust and improbable accusations, was at length put to death.

After such horrors towards his own family, Nero could have no scruple in exercising every species of arbitrary cruelty on his subjects. For a time, Burrhus thwarted his proceedings; and it therefore seems not wholly improbable that he hastened the death of this truest of his servants. Tacitus, however, does not venture to state this positively. Even during the lifetime of Burrhus, he not merely commenced the train of juvenile follies and abominable outrages towards women and virgins, boys, youths, and unoffending citizens, in his nightly excursions in company with his boon companions in Rome; but he exhibited himself, even at this period, publicly as a racer, singer, and harp-

player. Even on his first appearance, he conducted himself exactly in the manner of the classes so much despised in Rome; of jugglers, singers, and players. For it must be remarked, that, according to Roman manners, the class of artists who showed themselves in public, who amongst the Greeks had stood in high esteem, were viewed with no greater respect than jack-puddings and mountebanks. On these occasions Nero appeared attended by his guards, whose officers were posted at his side. Even Burrhus, though grieved to his inmost soul, was compelled, on Nero's first appearance, to acknowledge by loud plaudits the performance of his emperor. Seneca soon lost all influence after the death of Burrhus: he was forced to retire wholly from the court; and, from thenceforwards, the young ruler was altogether abandoned a prey to the scum of profligates, some of whom we must notice more particularly.

Tigellinus and Fenius Rufus, who stepped into the place of Burrhus, might very fitly contend with each other which of them was entitled to pre-eminence as the more thorough, merciless, and hardened slave of tyranny. The banquets of Tigellinus combined all that could have been imagined in the shape of overstrained and inordinate luxury by the Syrian or Egyptian rulers of old times. Petronius was in this court the superintendent, or *maître de plaisirs*, and ennobled the extravagances of lust by a philosophy which would have done honour even to Aristippus, by a mixture of wit and lewdness, jest and argument, cynic principles and voluptuous practice.

Till Nero's times, the provinces at least had not been witnesses of imperial folly, wantonness, and debauchery. Caligula and Claudius had never been long absent from Rome; and Tiberius had buried himself in an island, where access to him was difficult. Nero, on the contrary, alternately sang at Rome and Naples. He even travelled to Greece; appeared there publicly at the most solemn festivals and antique games; squandered in the

most reckless manner the treasures of the empire, and exercised the most revolting and unprovoked barbarities. He did not dare to seek initiation into the Mysteries; these ceremonies had terrors for a soul conscious of being stained with every species of crime and of impurity. Conspiracies he feared not, so long as he felt sure of his guards; but took advantage of every appearance or pretext of conspiracy, to give his daily atrocities the air of necessary severities.

Nero, however, does not seem to have become the object of general hatred till after the great fire in Rome. Up to that period, the armies had been content with his bounties, and the people had adored him for his daily celebration of games and spectacles of hitherto unparalleled magnificence. He lavished besides unheard of sums in public banquets and distributions. After the fire, he was often forced to keep back the pay of the troops, to delay the hard-earned recompense of the veterans. The inhabitants of the capital were deprived of the sites of their old abodes, that the emperor might have the satisfaction of building a palace of enormous extent, broad new streets, and splendid houses and colonnades. By this tremendous conflagration, three of the fourteen districts of the city were utterly consumed, and isolated fragments only of seven others were left standing, only three divisions of the old city were left untouched. This fire had broken out while Nero was at Antium, in farm buildings belonging to Tigellinus, extended rapidly to the circus, caught the booths where oil and other combustible materials lay, and spread in the direction of the Palatine and Cælian hills. Nero delayed long before he thought fit to return to the city, and not only hindered measures being taken to extinguish the flames, but even caused those who attempted to stop the fire or to save their property to be forcibly held back, that room might be cleared for his plans by the conflagration. Afterwards, indeed, he did all he could to free himself from the suspicion of having been the incendiary, and to throw

it on the Christians, who were accused of hatred of all mankind, and who were generally viewed with detestation for their aversion from every known description of worship, heathenish or Jewish ; for their refusing to perform, after the usual fashion, the public transactions which were closely connected with religion ; and finally for the singularity of their lives, and of their social relations. However, Nero did not succeed any better in clearing himself by persecuting the Christians than in regaining popularity by his ostentatious provisions for supplying the poor with temporary shelter and subsistence. Nero appropriated the sites which had been cleared by the conflagration ; employed two architects, Severus and Celer, to plan an immense imperial palace, where thousands of poor citizens had formerly had their humble dwellings, and proposed to obviate the danger of future conflagrations, by means of spacious streets and colonnades around the houses. Enormous halls, lakes, extensive prospects, nay, whole forests and parks, were designed to be included in the new domain, and to embellish Nero's *Golden House* — the title of the intended palace ; and the most unheard-of oppressions and extortions were put in practice to afford the means for extravagances equally unheard of.

About this time the number of conspiracies was augmented, amongst which the most remarkable was that of C. Piso, — partly because Fenius Rufus, one of the commanders of the guard, was induced to join it merely by his enmity to Tigellinus, and partly on account of the remorseless murders and cruelties for which it was employed as a pretext. Even Seneca, who shortly before, immediately after the fire, had voluntarily sacrificed his eagerly gained and hoarded riches, was involved in this conspiracy, and reduced to regard as a favour the permission to die by his own hand, instead of by that of the executioner. Nero was himself amazed at the weakness of the race which he ruled, and proudly exclaimed, that he was the only prince who

had ever fully conceived how far the license of arbitrary power might be carried. Had he reflected on the limits set to all human powers and energies, he might long have maintained his seat, by the aid of his guards and his German mercenaries, against the degenerate race he had to deal with. But he pushed to such a length the indulgence of his wild caprices, as to threaten a stop to the whole machine of state; and the discontent of the troops and of their officers broke out at once on different points of the frontier. This was provoked by Nero's thoughtless conduct, in bestowing profuse donatives and gratuitous distributions of corn on the guards, while the troops on the frontiers were long kept in arrear of their regular pay.

Symptoms of a general fermentation were soon visible. Nero alone did not perceive the popular discontent. He took a journey to Greece; and during a year which he spent in that province, not only spent enormous sums, and exposed himself in his usual manner, but left the freedmen Helius and Polycletus to domineer at pleasure over the capital and the whole west. While Nero loitered in Greece, disaffection arrived at such a pitch, that Helius joined him there, expressly to work on his fears, and urge his return. Nero returned, indeed, in haste, but never deemed of anticipating the out-breaking of popular discontent by a mild and cautious policy. He rather commenced a new series of crimes; and thus may be said himself to have excited the disturbances which broke out at the same moment on different points of his vast empire.

Galba, one of the most energetic characters of those times, but unfortunately neither of an age, nor favoured by circumstances, which could make him either loved or feared by the soldiery, on whom depended the destinies of the empire, was at this time governor of Hither Spain. He learned that Nero had sentenced him to death without a hearing; found himself supported by the troops in his province, and threw off allegiance, without himself assuming the title of em-

peror. His aim was to stand forth as the defender of the senate against the persecution of Nero. The south of France had already become disgusted with the existing tyranny. Vindex, a native of Aquitania, had assembled around him a force of more than 100,000 men, and, unambitious himself of the imperial dignity, formed a coalition with Galba, who was besides reinforced by Otho, a former partner of Nero's lusts and excesses, who at that time governed Lusitania by the title of imperial legate. For Otho, as appeared in the sequel, hoped to pave his way to the empire, under cover of the aged Galba's feeble administration. A number of other generals and governors also declared for Galba, so soon as he took the title of lieutenant-general of the senate and of the Roman people.

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Nero received the first news of revolt in the south of France, but did not interrupt the course of his pleasures, or his presence and superintendence at the public games, for a moment. He was rather pleased with having a fair pretext to wreak his rage on the province, and to confiscate the wealth of its rich inhabitants. Even Galba's revolt gave him no alarm; but when, on his return to Rome, he imposed oppressive extra taxes, on pretence of defraying the charges of the war department, as no one would enrol himself at the levy of troops which he set on foot, his position became more and more alarming. Moreover Nymphidius, who commanded the guards jointly with Tigellinus, so soon as he was fully aware of Nero's indecision, his intentions of flight, his utter incapacity for decisive measures, in the name of Galba promised every soldier of the guard a donative of somewhat more than 25*l.*, on condition of deserting Nero, and recognising Galba as emperor. Thereupon the guards deserted Nero, the senate assembled, declared him a tyrant, and recognised Galba as emperor. Nero, to escape the rage of the pusillanimous senate, which he had bitterly provoked and affronted, caused his remaining adherents to put him to death; and Galba came from Spain, where he remained while

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his success was doubtful, on learning the recognition of the senate.

A man of sixty-three years of age, who, during the latter period of his Spanish administration, had betrayed significant marks of failing energy, was ill fitted to maintain himself at the head of a military state. The infirmities attendant on age, accompanied by a degree of frugality which even in a private man would have seemed sordid, soon gave opportunities for popular derision. His weaknesses, however, were unperceived, till he came to reside in Rome. His accession was at first welcomed with eagerness.

Before Galba's arrival Nymphidius had conducted himself in the capital as an absolute lord and master. He alone stood surety for the donative which he had promised the troops, and which had not been confirmed by the new emperor. He had taken it upon himself to supersede Tigellinus in his former joint command of the guards; he gave entertainment in Galba's name to persons of prætorian and consular rank, received the assembled senate in his antichamber, seized all means of gaining popularity, and interfered in every transaction between the senate or consuls and Galba. At length it came into his head to trace his descent from the line of the Cæsars, and to found upon this hereditary pretensions to the succession. He learned therefore with terror from the delegates whom he had sent to Galba, that Titius Vinius, placed by the new emperor as his vicegerent in Spain, possessed unlimited influence with his master, and that Cornelius Laco was appointed præfect of the guards; by consequence that, whenever the emperor made his appearance, his game was up. Upon this, he resolved to venture all extremities. He intended to visit the camp at midnight, and there to be proclaimed emperor; but Antonius Honoratus, one of his officers, had already estranged the troops from their commander, and when Nymphidius hastened amongst them to regain their suffrages, he fell by their hands. It appears from all the circumstances

that Antonius Honoratus must have received powers from Galba or his friends to act as he did ; for immediately after the slaughter of Nymphidius, all his friends were put to death as by order of the emperor.

These executions, and the too visible influence of Vinius, excited no advantageous prepossession for the new reign. What was still more unlucky was, that he found himself compelled to withhold the gratuities which had been promised by Nymphidius, and to cut to pieces one of the legions which had fiercely demanded the bargained amount. Several other, partly indeed unavoidable, executions, the unpopular demeanour of the favourites, the emperor's avarice, the discontent of the guards, and of the other troops collected by Nero round the metropolis on the first alarm of revolt, foreboded a brief term to the reign of Galba. It required but a signal to reunite the scattered elements of discord.

The signal was first given by the legions in Upper Germany, then eagerly hailed by the friends, companions, and protégés of the late emperor, whose number was in Rome very considerable, and finally caught up by the mass of the populace, who in Rome, as everywhere, have more turn for diversion and debauchery than for patriotism. In January, A. D. 69, Galba received the intelligence from his commissary (procurator) in Belgic Gaul, that the legions in Upper Germany demanded of the senate a younger and more enterprising emperor. Deprived by gout of the use of his hands and feet, Galba at length made up his mind to elect a colleague and successor, who might be capable of acting for him on all occasions ; and consulted his three favourites, Vinius, Laco, and Icelus, respecting the choice of a person whom he was thus to adopt in the place of a son. Vinius counselled him to choose Otho, the favourite of the guards of Nero, and the partaker of his excesses. Laco and Icelus, however, opposed this appointment, knowing that Vinius was closely leagued with Otho, and had promised him his daughter in marriage. Galba accordingly made choice,

not of Otho, but of Piso Licinianus, a man of respectable birth, and of unspotted reputation. The chosen successor was presented, according to custom, first to the soldiery; but unfortunately Galba neglected the usage observed since the days of Caligula, — that of making a donative to the troops on such occasions, although he was forced to confess, in the very speech in which he announced his successor, that two of the legions had thrown off his authority.

Otho had long courted the favour of the soldiery and the people. He had made profuse donatives, had given away whole estates, had forwarded individual applications to the emperor; and, on every occasion when Galba had been entertained at his house, had distributed gratuities to the companies of the guards on duty. These arts had been overlooked by the emperor, in consequence of the good understanding betwixt Otho and Vinus. Otho, indeed, who was deeply in debt, found himself at a loss for the sum which was requisite for the attainment of his objects; he risked, however, some tentative steps with a handful of people who had been gained by him. Within a week after Piso's adoption all was prepared for a first attempt. Otho appointed a meeting with the conspirators in the forum, at the moment when Galba should be engaged in performing a solemn sacrifice. Only twenty-three of the conspirators assembled; Otho seemed irresolute, but his comrades forced him to stand to his purpose. They carried him across the forum, where about thirty soldiers joined their ranks, and from thence to the head-quarters of the prætorians; where the malcontents seized the opportunity of bringing about a long-desired revolution. After receiving salutations as emperor from the soldiers, and from all the old companions and friends of Nero, Otho again presented himself in the city. Of all the troops by which Galba was surrounded, one man alone steadfastly defended him; of all the remoter divisions of the army, only the German guards, whom Nero had ordered to Alexandria, and afterwards recalled, showed

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any alacrity in coming up to his aid, out of gratitude, it is said, for the care which Galba had shown for their good treatment after the hardships of a long voyage, from which they returned in bad health. Galba was first despatched, and then Piso. Spain, Mauritania, Carthage, and the province of Africa, with the legions in Dalmatia, Pannonia, and Mœsia, gave in their adhesion to Otho ; who was recognised also by Mucianus, the governor of Syria, by Vespasian in Palestine, and by all Egypt. Unfortunately, however, he had to contend with an enemy nearer home, who brought the affair to a decision before his eastern forces could join him.

This enemy was Vitellius, his rival and successor in the empire, or rather, the German army which had called its general to the throne. Vitellius, who was not wanting in talents, acquirements, and good qualities, had, however, brought himself into favour exclusively by his vices in the reigns of Caligula, Claudius, and Nero. Every one therefore was astonished when Galba sent him to Lower Germany, to take the command of the legions stationed there. However, his gross familiarity instantly gained him the hearts of his troops, and he had even made a good impression, during his passage through Upper Germany, on the soldiers in that district, who were discontented with Galba, because they had from the first espoused his part without getting any reward for it. Accordingly, as soon as they learned that the legions on the Lower Rhine had proclaimed Vitellius emperor, they confirmed the choice by their suffrage ; and the principal towns of Gaul, particularly Trier and Langres, both of which had been harshly treated by Galba, also declared in his favour. Vitellius was proclaimed emperor at Cologne at the same moment ; when the statues of Galba were thrown down by the troops in Upper Germany, and a new ruler demanded from the senate.

But Vitellius was in no condition to take the command of an army. He was deficient in activity and celerity, as well as decision, and incapable of imposing

even a brief restraint on his groveling passion for excess in the pleasures of the table. Fabius Valens took his place at the head of the legions, and won all France. A. Cæcina found the same success in Upper Germany. The legions in England and in Spain proclaimed Vitellius emperor, and their example was followed by the troops in the Grisons, Tyrol, and Upper Bavaria; and the whole country north of the Po, Milan, and Turin, espoused his cause; when Cæcina and Fabius Valens both directed their march upon Italy.

Otho was now at last compelled to go and meet the enemy. Fabius Valens and Cæcina were united more than a match for him; but he expected reinforcements so considerable from Mœsia, Pannonia, and Dalmatia, that his hopes of success visibly turned on delaying any decisive collision. He did the reverse; and showed himself during the whole expedition worthy to have been the companion of Nero. Tacitus extols him indeed on account of the last act of his life, by which he put an end to the civil war. But it clearly appears from the whole account of the last three months of his life, that his effeminate soul was wholly unable for any sustained effort. He was no general; he was even no soldier: his troops indeed were heartily devoted to him and full of ardour, but utterly without confidence in or subordination to their leaders. The feeling that his own adherents were likely to fail him at any moment, induced Otho to provoke a speedy decision of the contest. Nevertheless, he was neither present in person at the slight previous skirmishes, nor at the general engagement which was about to be decisive of his fate, nor even made the slightest exertion to aid the success of his own cause. In the neighbourhood of Cremona, Cæcina and Valens came into presence of the army of Otho, and inflicted on it a defeat and considerable losses. Still however nothing would have been easier than to protract the war. Even were Italy lost, the East and Africa stood open to Otho; but he felt himself no worthier of the empire than his rival, and

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chose rather to decide his own destiny, than to allow it to depend upon the variable faith of his soldiery. The prætorians, however, preserved a steady adherence to Otho, and encouraged him, as well as themselves, with the prospect of the approaching legions of Mœsia and Pannonia. But he lost self-confidence; stabbed himself with his own hand to the heart, with a degree of firmness greater than could be expected of an effeminate lustling; and won from after-ages the renown of having purchased with life the blessings of peace and tranquillity for his country.

Vitellius learned in Gaul, where he still sluggishly remained, the victory of his legions and the death of his rival. The senate did not content itself with acknowledging him as emperor, but decreed the solemn expression of the public thanks to the German army. In the mean time the new emperor made no haste to seat himself in his throne; but took his ease in Lyons, and afterwards in Cremona and Bologna, where he revelled at feasts, and attended gladiatorial games. Though the issue of the contest was decided in April, it was not till July that the new emperor entered Rome, at the head of a force of sixty thousand men. Nero himself had not run a more shameless course of waste and riot. His golden palace seemed not even sufficiently splendid to Vitellius, whose table alone swallowed up sums so immense, that Josephus doubts if the whole Roman empire would in the long run have been rich enough to bear the load of the emperor's table expenses. Happily, the experiment was not tried; for while Vitellius was revelling in the capital, a rival chief arose in the east, more worthy of the empire than had been Galba, or Otho, or Vitellius. The legions stationed in Palestine exalted Vespasian to the imperial dignity.

CHAP. III.

VESPASIAN, TITUS, DOMITIAN, NERVA, TRAJAN.

VESPASIAN had fought with distinction in Britain; he had restored with surprising expedition the discipline of the troops in Syria, where the Jewish war engaged him for three years; he had subjugated and laid waste the greater part of the country, the sea-ports of Galilee, and invested Jerusalem itself, when the imperial dignity was unexpectedly offered him. The third legion, which had served under him, was amongst those troops which marched from the Danube to aid Otho against Vitellius, and learned his death upon their route. This legion persuaded their fellow-soldiers to unite their votes in favour of Vespasian. Vespasian himself had given his allegiance to Galba, Otho, and even Vitellius; but the stern silence of his troops on the occasion of his taking the oath to the last-named of these fleeting powers, had betrayed their dispositions; and the first opportunity for revolt was taken with alacrity. He himself hesitated long before he could be induced to leave the prosecution of the siege of Jerusalem to his son Titus; and to adopt, in conjunction with Mucianus, measures for taking the reins of empire. No great efforts were required to overthrow Vitellius; who was sunk so low, that his own mother, a highly respectable matron, despaired of him, and hastened her own end, to avoid surviving his.* The soldiers of the German army, who had raised him to the empire, retained indeed their fidelity to him, but solely for their own sake. All the other armies and provinces fell off on the first intelligence that Vespasian

* "Erat illi et fessa ætate parens, quæ tamen, paucis ante diebus, opportunâ morte excidium domus prævenit, nihil principatu filii assecuta nisi luctum et bonam famam." — *Tacit. Hist.* l. iii. c. 67.

had been proclaimed by the legions of Syria and Egypt. The third legion, in Mœsia, and those in Pannonia and Illyricum, made a descent upon Italy, under Antonius Primus, and conquered Rome for Vespasian before he even made his appearance. The western provinces, Spain and Gaul, soon followed the lead of the east, and the forces which had elevated Vitellius now deserted him.

The capital alone made demonstrations of resistance. Sabinus, the brother of Vespasian, happened to be there: Vitellius was too pusillanimous to contemplate any sort of defence; and Antonius Primus wishing to treat the city with forbearance, negotiations took place, and Vitellius readily abdicated the government. But these transactions were rendered void by the soldiery and the populace, who had shared the low debaucheries of the self-degraded ruler; and who now placed him, against his will, at the head of their disorderly bands, attacked the opposite party in the capital with the utmost fury, and forced Sabinus to fly with his little band of adherents into the capitol. For the struggle which now commenced in the city Vitellius was entirely blameless, as he would willingly have acquiesced in any terms which left him but life. His partisans, however, stormed the capitol, where design or negligence gave rise to a frightful conflagration, in which part of the historical monuments kept there were destroyed. Sabinus lost his life in these disorders; while Domitian, the second son of Vespasian, who was with him in the capitol, unfortunately preserved his. Antonius Primus took measures to revenge the breach of the treaty, and the slaughter of the adherents of his emperor, immediately after the above scene of conflagration and massacre. He forced an entrance into the city, occupied it with his troops, and cut down the riotous mob and soldiery without mercy. Vitellius died as he had lived. Vespasian was still absent in Egypt: Mucianus was, however, despatched to act as his representative and arrived in the metropolis on the very day after its capture. His arrival, however, had no effect in stop-

ping the course of bloodshed: executions and forced requisitions only ceased on the coming of the emperor.

It is probable that Vespasian would have experienced all the difficulties in possessing himself of imperial power which at first he had apprehended, if Vitellius had displayed the slightest talent or manliness of character. This may be inferred from the fact, that though almost all the troops and even officers of Vitellius revolted, yet, from October, when the first decisive actions took place, it was not till December that the capital was taken. Immediately after that event, the senate, by a formal decree, which is still in part extant, transferred to the new emperor all the rights which had belonged to the people and to the senate during the continuance of the republican constitution.*

The first act of the new prince was to rescind, by a single ordinance, all the senseless laws, decrees, and regulations of Nero; and the scope of his whole efforts was to heal the wounds which that tyrant had inflicted on the empire. Unfortunately, Vespasian had been a soldier before he ascended the throne, and had imbibed the common soldierlike ideas of renown and greatness. He was thus led to the policy of annihilating a number of petty states and governments, hitherto independent; such as Cilicia, Lesser Armenia, Comagene, Emesa, Chalcis, Judea, Rhodes, and Samos.

A rapid glance at the relations of the Roman empire to its neighbours, and to the petty states which retained the name of allies, will enable us to estimate the policy of Vespasian in this respect. In the times of the republic Rome was surrounded by a number of states, which were either, like the Asiatic kingdoms, in a condition of over-refinement and degeneracy, or, like Gaul and the mountainous tracts of Spain, in the earliest

* The Latin text, and a French translation of this remarkable instrument, which gives a very good view of the Roman constitution, such as it still existed *in these*, will be found in Beaufort, *Rep. Rom.* tom. ii p. 345—347. Nicolas Rienzi, in 1347, took, as a text for his appeal to the Roman people to vindicate their ancient rights, the declaratory parts of the tables on which this decree was engraved.

stage of civilisation. The Asiatic states were constantly disunited in their interior, and with their neighbours; those of Europe were so various in their character, and distinct in their interests, that permanent leagues against a common enemy were out of the question. These states, however, served Rome as a line of outposts against the attacks of the barbarous tribes of Asia and of Europe; who pursued war, like the chase, for occupation and for pastime; and combined only for one object—warfare against every one who had rich booty to yield as the reward of a sanguinary contest. In the latter times of the republic, but still more under the first emperors, the nominally allied but really subject states, which had hitherto served as a barrier against the immediate pressure of the warlike tribes beyond them, were dissolved, and merged into provinces, under various pretences. Henceforward the empire was brought in direct contact with hardy tribes, many of which were hostile to civilisation in every form. The consequences were soon visible. The Germans showed, by the overthrow of Varus, and, in Vespasian's own reign, by a revolt led by Claudius Civilis, who had served with distinction in Britain, how much was to be dreaded from their martial dispositions; and the tribes which were spread thickly over the regions north of the Danube became the more formidable the more the Romans obtained a firm footing in Bavaria and Suabia—from Ratisbon to Strasburg.

The first care of Vespasian, when at length he had arrived from Alexandria in Italy, was directed to the restoration of order in the finances, and of discipline in the army. He partly disbanded the profligate mob of soldiery which had been transferred from the legions of Vitellius into his, and kept the rest, like his former troops, under the strictest discipline. He rebuilt the streets of Rome, which Nero, who only thought of his own enormous palace, had left in ruins; and caused the thousands of tables, on which the decrees of the senate and people had been engraved*, and which had

* "Præne ab exordio urbis senatusconsulta, plebiscia."

been melted in the last conflagration, to be restored from such copies as could be procured in the provincial towns, or were in the possession of private persons. The senate, to which he restored its ancient rights, he formed into a regular imperial council; and raised the body in repute by augmenting the number of members, after expelling all the wretches who had crept in during the late governments, or had expressly been intruded into the senate to degrade its character. The new prince himself gave an example of the strictest morality; presided in person in courts of justice, suffered nothing like luxury or effeminacy about him, and permitted every citizen free access to his presence. In public he maintained a demeanour of seriousness and dignity; in private intercourse he was friendly; and constantly solicitous to present himself to the Romans as the first among the senators only, and never as an absolute ruler. Accordingly, he neither dreaded calumnies nor conspiracies, relying on the popular attachment. The gravest charge against his reign was the influence of his concubine Cænis, who was said to drive a regular traffic in places, public offices, and privileges; at which Vespasian was accused not merely of conniving, but of actually participating its profits. However, his connection with Cænis gave the Romans so little offence, that they viewed it as an instance of intolerable haughtiness when his son Domitian, on his return from a journey, drew back from her embrace, holding his hand out for her to kiss. Many anecdotes of Vespasian's avarice have been preserved, which prove, however, little but his humour in familiar intercourse; or at most show, like the similar anecdotes circulated respecting Galba, the lamentable state of an empire, even under the best rulers, which has no other dependence than on its treasures and its armies. One of the common anecdotes which are said to show Vespasian's avarice is, that when his son Titus offered some remonstrances on the tax which he had laid on urine, he put under his nose a gold piece which had been

derived from that impost, and asked him whether it smelt ill. Another is of a mule-driver, who, on pretence of his mule having lost a shoe, kept the emperor's litter waiting at a place where a person, who had some representation to make to him, could address him most conveniently. He asked the muleteer, jestingly, *how much he had got for the shoe?* and demanded half.

Notwithstanding the stigma of avarice, Vespasian showed the utmost munificence in promoting every object of utility; patronised arts and sciences; and was the first prince who assigned regular salaries to the teachers of those branches of art and science which are essential to statesmen and men of business.

A. D.
79. On the death of Vespasian the government descended to his eldest son Titus, who had distinguished himself as a general by the taking of Jerusalem, but of whose character not the most advantageous impressions had been formed.

Titus had already shared with his father the glory of annihilating the Jewish state, and the general cares of public administration. On the election of Vespasian as emperor, he had left his son Titus at the head of the army in Judea, and added a fourth to the three legions which he had had under his orders there. With four legions of Romans, highly incensed against the Jewish name, and a considerable number of auxiliaries, who had been furnished by the province and the neighbouring princes, a triumph over the wretched Jews, pent up in Jerusalem, and who soon became so destitute of provisions as to devour each other, could not be a matter of much difficulty. Nevertheless, the conquest of Jerusalem was ranked by the Romans with the deeds of Mummius and the younger Scipio. The obstinate fanaticism of the besieged exceeded belief. The site of the town favoured their resistance: all the overtures made by the Roman general were rejected; and he was forced to storm one fortified height after another, and at last to take successively each enclosure of the temple. Willingly would Titus have preserved at least the

temple ; but a soldier had hurled a firebrand into the building, and to save it became impossible in the confusion. Even after the taking and the burning of the temple, the Jews continued to defend the quarter called the Lower Town, and, when driven out of that quarter by storm and conflagration, the Upper Town and the castles or towers of Hippicus, Phasaël, and Mariamne. At last these too were stormed ; and thus was quelled the Jewish revolt against the Roman dominion, in the fifth year after its first outbreaking. Josephus affirms that in these five years 1,100,000 Jews perished, 97,000 were taken captive. The fate of those shut up in Jerusalem was wretched beyond conception. After the capture 11,000 voluntarily died by hunger, or were carelessly left so to die by the Romans. Only 700 persons above the age of seventeen were reserved for the triumphal procession of Titus ; the rest were sent in chains to the Egyptian mines and quarries, or were left to fight with each other, with other gladiators, or with wild beasts. Youths under seventeen were sold for slaves, and the remains of the city and temple rased to the ground ; yet the Jews again gathered by degrees about Mount Zion ; and in Adrian's times Jerusalem was in part newly inhabited. Titus and Vespasian held their triumph over the Jews together ; yet neither of them thought fit to assume the honorary surname of *Jewish*, as there was something odious even then in the sound of that appellation.

After his triumph, Titus assumed the post of prefect of the guard, without apparently considering the perilous importance of such an office vested in the hands of the heir to the throne. Before the reign of Vespasian, this office had never been entrusted to any man of higher than equestrian rank. As prefect and lieutenant of his father, he conducted the whole business of the government ; and almost led the people to expect in him a second Nero, from the rigours of his public administration, combined with the licentiousness of his private conduct. No sooner, however, had he assumed

the reins of government, than even the appearance of a scandalous life vanished ; and, instead of a second Nero, who, it seems, had been expected in him, a prince was found, who made benignity harmonise with justice, in a degree, perhaps, unequalled by any man, before or since. The first proof of his resolution to sacrifice, as emperor, every private passion and pleasure to the weal of the world entrusted to him, he afforded by repudiating Berenice, who already behaved and regarded herself as empress. Immediately after Titus's accession, she was removed from Rome, the people having given unequivocal signs of discontent on being called to obey an Asiatic mistress. Berenice was the daughter of Herod Agrippa, who had ruled all Judea ; the sister of another Herod Agrippa, ruler of Ituræa ; and wife of Herod of Chalcis. Titus had made her acquaintance on his expedition against Jerusalem ; she had followed him to Rome, and he had probably promised her marriage. She returned indeed to Rome at a later period, after her banishment, but her influence was never traced in affairs.

The Romans only enjoyed a very short time the blessing of their wisest and best ruler. Titus appears to have been sickly even before his accession ; but perhaps his brother Domitian, who maintained that his father's will had appointed him joint ruler of the empire, may have hastened his removal by poison.

Titus died A. D. 81, two years and three months after his father.

He was succeeded by Domitian, who revived the regimen of Nero. The capital faults of this prince were inordinate and ludicrous pride, childish vanity, and measureless extravagance. His very demeanour, voice, and accent, announced a despotic and arrogant nature. He was not however deficient in capacity ; and, in particular, had cultivated poetry with some success. No sooner had he succeeded to the government, than he seemed to think it beneath his dignity farther to busy himself with science. He now studied only the me-

morials (*commentaria*) and the journals (*acta*) of Tiberius; while his own letters, edicts, and speeches were framed by others. At length he hated and fled mankind, like Tiberius; and combined his gloomy misanthropy with the mental unsoundness of Caligula. If we may place reliance on Suetonius's collection of anecdotes, Domitian was corrupted by early excesses, and led into extravagances, which drew oppressions and cruelties after them, by an unbridled taste for public amusements, wild-beast baitings, gladiatorial games, races; in short, all the sports of the amphitheatre and the circus, accompanied with an absurd passion for building. The whole tenor and incidents of his reign are strongly and briefly characterised by the same writer, when he says that Domitian was *inopiâ rapax, metu sævus*, — was impelled to cruelty by his fears, and to plunder by his necessities.

The first years of the government of Domitian were however better than could have been expected from his well-known character. He kept in such control the higher class of official personages, of whom the senate principally consisted, that no one, either in Rome or in the provinces, dared to neglect his duty; and functionaries never were more incorrupt than under his government.* He cleared away the nuisance of informers and calumniators, forwarded the course of justice, and, during the first years of his reign, was not only free from all imputation of avarice, but splendid and generous. During these years he issued a number of excellent regulations. When at length he perceived how few friends he had in the senate and higher orders, he redoubled his donatives, distributions, entertainments, and games, to win the populace; and granted to the soldiery so considerable an increase of pay (one fourth), that he himself soon acknowledged the utter impossibility of meeting the enormous demands thus

* “Magistratibus quoque urbis provinciarumque præsidibus coercendis tantum curæ adhibuit, ut neque modestiores unquam, neque justiores extiterint.” — *Sueton. Domitian*, c. xiii.

brought upon the public treasury. In this embarrassment he thought of reducing the number of troops; but this was out of the question, without giving rise to disturbances, and exposing the empire to the attacks of barbarians.

The danger already experienced from the warlike populations on the right bank of the Rhine, and on the left of the Danube, increased in magnitude and urgency with every extension of Roman dominion. The more the Romans came in contact with the inland tribes of the continent, the more they drove them, by meddling with their internal affairs, to league with each other. Accordingly, under the reign of Domitian, the Marcomanni and Suevi made their appearance; two formidable confederations of German origin, combined with the Sarmatians, who, proceeding from Asia, took possession of whole tracts formerly occupied by Scythian nations. The German league of the Chatti also acquired importance in these times, and extended itself at the expense of the once powerful Cherusci. In the districts of Moldavia and Wallachia, a wholly new confederation of immigrant tribes made its appearance under the name of Dacians, with whom Domitian was in constant warfare during the last years of his reign: so that, according to the testimony of Tacitus, the new province on the Danube was continually exposed to their ravages, and legions stationed there, or single posts and fortified places, from time to time were attacked, and often wholly destroyed. The prince who finally stood at the head of this Dacian league (and who is called by the Romans Decebalus), presumed to offer them peace on the terms of paying him a sort of tribute. Domitian reached at last such a pitch of tyrannous distrust, that he dared not intrust any important command to a leader of tried ability. Under his government Agrippa had made conquests in Britain, which extended the Roman dominions to Edinburgh and Dunbarton. Agrippa was recalled from the scene of his triumphs by the suspicious despot, who never could be induced to employ him against the Dacians on

the Danube, where his presence was precisely the most necessary.

To enumerate the cruelties of Domitian during his latter years, or to describe the diabolical malice evinced by him in inventing tortures, and tormenting the individuals who surrounded him, would be a task no less fatiguing to the writer than to the reader. He hastened on the last act of the tragedy, by keeping the whole senate in a continual state of mortal terror; and showed no more forbearance towards the tools of his own cruelties than if they had been Christians, philosophers, or *fries*, or had shown some symptoms of independence in sentiment or action. At the moment of Domitian's death, Apollonius of Tyana, who was at that time playing his part in Asia Minor, is said to have announced the event to his auditory at Ephesus. "Apollonius, at Ephesus," says his biographer*, "saw the whole as it passed at Rome, while he was lecturing in the colonnade, surrounded by trees, about mid-day. First he appeared to be struck dumb by some object of terror; then he pursued his discourse in a lower tone than he was wont, exactly like a person who sees something while he is speaking. Then he came to a full stop. At length he cast an earnest look (*δεινόν*) on the ground, went three or four steps forwards, and exclaimed, 'Strike the tyrant! pierce him!' not as one who sees in a mirror the reflection of a deed, but as one who is present, and strikes in, as it were, at the performance." The soldiery were no less attached to Domitian than they had been to Nero; the citizens were helpless, the senate destitute of influence. None could approach the tyrant but his confidential servants, and those employed in receiving or executing his merciless commands. These tools of his caprice became the instruments of his ruin; and the animating soul of the conspiracy was his wife, Domitia, who found her name inscribed in the intended list of victims, which by accident had fallen into the hands of the conspirators.

* Philostr. in vit. Apoll. Tyan. lib. viii. c. 26.

The chamberlain Parthenius, and his colleague Sigerus, inseparable companions of the tyrant, his private secretary Entellus, had leagued themselves with Domitia; and Stephanus, the most favoured of his freedmen, with the two prefects, Norbanus and Petronius Secundus, undertook the executive part of the conspiracy. This was by no means easy, notwithstanding all the caution with which the measures of the conspirators had been taken, for the tyrant himself was not deficient in bodily strength and activity, and the prætorian guards were devoted to his person; so much so, that they afterwards inflicted the penalty of death on all those who had taken part in the murder of Domitian. The joy of the senate and better class of the citizens, on this event, was proportionate to the sorrow of the soldiers and the populace.

A. D.
96.

Nerva, whom the prefects proclaimed emperor after the death of Domitian, like his successor Trajan, aimed to concentrate the powers of government in the senate, and to create a new description of aristocracy. Vespasian and Titus seem to have kept the same object in view, when they transferred from the provinces to the senate the richest and most influential persons; but a plan of this kind only could be put in execution when a military leader sat on the throne. Nerva soon learned this by experience. The prætorians and the populace, discontented with the government of an aged and strict ruler, stirred up continual disorders during the whole of the first year of his reign. Their discontent with the new emperor reached its highest point, when, to restore the ruined finances of the empire, he curtailed the splendour of public spectacles, games, and combats of gladiators, and sold the costly furniture and collections which had been heaped up by the vanity of Domitian. The officers of the treasury and finance were no longer licensed, as formerly, to augment the revenue by every means; and the senators' lives were secured from their rapacity, Nerva having solemnly promised that no senator should suffer capital punishment. The

fate of Galba was now impending visibly over the new emperor ; his commands were defied, his authority disregarded. He resolved, therefore, like Galba, to adopt a respected and vigorous colleague ; and had more judgment and fortune in his choice.

At the moment when anarchy raged in the metropolis, Nerva surprised the people by nominating a colleague and successor, selected not from the senate but the army, and one who possessed in the highest degree the affections of the soldiery. The time and manner of the appointment could not have been more happily chosen. Ulpius Trajan, who stood at the head of the legions on the Maas, on the Scheldt and Lower Rhine, was proclaimed at the very moment when he was solemnly bearing to the capitol a branch of laurel, to celebrate his victories in Pannonia, and when the people had hailed him already as a god, on account of his kingly mien and heroic bearing.* The disorders in Rome ceased so soon as Trajan's election was known ; and even the proud prætorians obeyed his commands without hesitation, when he ordered them out of the city and drafted them into the other legions.

Trajan was a Spaniard by birth, though his father had held the highest Roman offices.† At any former period, however, the Romans would not have borne to yield obedience to a stranger. Above a year after his election (Oct. A. D. 97), and almost a year after the death of Nerva (Jan. 98), Trajan first fixed his residence in Rome ; and by the choice of his friends and of his servants, amongst whom were found a Pliny and a Tacitus ; by his reverence for justice and the laws, for equal rights and public-spirited actions, old usages, and the dignity of the senate, he showed what could be done by sheer straightforward sense and goodness of

* " Siquidem omnis turba, quæ limen insederat, ad ingressum tuum foribus reclusis, jam quidem, ut tunc arbitrabatur deum, ceterum, ut docuit eventus, te consalutavit imperatorem."

† " Credent ne posteri," says Pliny, " patricio, consulari et triumphali patre genitum, quum fortissimum, amplissimum, amantissimum sui exercitum regeret, imperatorem non ab exereitu factum ? "

heart, an uncorrupted and hardy cause of life without artificial culture. He was, however, led by his military habits to admit the unfortunate error of imagining, that the defence of the empire could be promoted by farther extension of its limits, and that manners could be improved by exciting a passion for military glory.

Trajan's first campaign was against the Dacian monarch, Decebalus, whose incursions had been latterly bought off by Domitian with yearly presents, which too much resembled an ignominious tribute, being extorted by threats, and levied on the inhabitants of the province by means of a most burthensome impost. Trajan stopped the payment of this impost; and fresh inroads being made by the Dacians on the territories of Rome, the emperor, the best soldier and officer in his own dominions, proceeded to the Danube in person, crossed it, and avenged the trifling injuries done by the Dacians to the province south of the Danube by carrying devastation and slaughter along the opposite shores. So early as the third year of this war, the barbarian monarch was compelled to humble himself before the conqueror, and accept such terms of peace as he should prescribe.

Trajan grossly abused the right of conquest. He retained possession of part of the country (the present Bannat); placed a Roman garrison in the pass of the iron gate; and it seemed as though he were resolved to possess himself of the hill country, and of the tracts around the Dacian capital, Sarmizegethosa or Varhely. The Dacians and their king were greatly irritated by these demonstrations. Decebalus, according to the indications given by Roman writers, was by no means a barbarian of the sort which we might have expected to find, in those times, in the southern regions of Russia. He had many persons in his pay who had served in the Roman armies, and ordered his troops and their mode of arming after the Roman model. He had also attracted into his service, or kidnapped from the neighbouring provinces, a number of skilful workpeople, whom he employed in constructing war-machines. These

preparations, and the invitations addressed by the Dacian monarch to a neighbouring nation to join in his alliance, Trajan declared a breach of the peace which had recently been concluded ; and caused Decebalus to be again declared an enemy of Rome by the senate. Hereupon he again marched to the Danube, and showed, on his arrival, that his intention was to extend the domain of Rome beyond the boundary of that river ; the unhappiest project that ever entered the head of a Roman emperor. Near Severin he built the renowned bridge over the Danube, which exceeded 4500 feet in length, and which was thrown across the river by a Greek architect from Damascus, at a place where the stream was particularly rapid.

In the districts of Wallachia and Moldavia military operations are embarrassed by peculiar obstacles. This was felt by Trajan, who conducted the war with extreme caution. He levelled roads, and turned streams from their course ; hunted his enemy from wood to wood, from morass to morass, till at length Decebalus, in order not to fall into the hands of the Romans, died by his own. After his death, Trajan formed the determination to plant colonies in the land which he had occupied on the other side of the river, and to humanise the barbarians by the arts of civilisation. He transported from all parts of the Roman empire great numbers of people into these uncultured but fruitful regions ; founded towns and villages, and succeeded in establishing the Latin as the language of the country, so that traces of its use are found there even at the present day. These settlements, however, tempted fresh attacks from the populous tribes who had a permanent or precarious abode in Poland and southern Russia. Thrace and Mœsia gained important advantages by this expedition, and rose to a flourishing condition since that period as Roman provinces ; new cities received the name of the emperor, his spouse, or his victories ; and the best troops for recruiting the legions were levied from these provinces.

The victories of Trajan, and the sensation which they made in the empire, appear to have estranged him from the former sobriety of his views on civil and judicial administration. Neither the public spectacles and festivities which he caused to be held after his return from Dacia, nor his eastern expeditions, accord with the character of wise moderation, and aversion from unnecessary expense, which had been expected of him. He caused a column a hundred and ten feet in height to be erected to celebrate his victories, which presented, in spiral reliefs, his martial achievements, in particular the Dacian expeditions, and on which was placed his statue, of colossal dimensions. He built a grand triumphal arch in Beneventum, and carried a road across the Pontine marshes, which was called by his name, and in one respect excelled the ancient highways, as it was furnished, at certain intervals, with houses of entertainment for travellers. Works like these were worthy of a great prince; but the splendour of Trajan's public games and festivals swallowed up enormous sums, and only served to corrupt the people. These sports were continued a hundred and twenty-three successive days; and it was sought to surpass all preceding emperors in the rarity and number of the wild beasts brought on the theatre. The number of wild beasts which were exhibited on this occasion is given by Xiphilinus, in an extract from Dio Cassius, at eleven thousand; the number of gladiators, at ten thousand; so that we must confess with horror, that one of the best emperors was one of the chief patrons of the cruel and unnatural diversions of the dissolute inhabitants of the capital.

The eastern expedition, which Trajan commenced immediately after the celebration of his last Dacian victories, must be viewed in the same light as his other acts of ostentatious extravagance. The first stage of his expedition was Antioch, as a point of observation from whence he might view how the land lay, or, in other words, how he might accomplish a triumph over the Parthians. From Antioch he proceeded to

Armenia, where he found Exedarus, a dependant of the Parthians, on the throne. Trajan would not recognise this prince, on account of his Parthian connection ; and required of the Parthian king Chosroes to withdraw his troops from Armenia, and abandon Exedarus to his destiny. Chosroes endeavoured to avert the impending storm, and sent an embassy to Trajan with presents and the most friendly overtures. Trajan received this embassy in Athens, but his plans being made up he refused to entertain any proposals. Chosroes, before he despatched the embassy, had already removed Exedarus from the Armenian throne, and had transferred it to a Parthian prince, Parthemasiris. The latter seemed disposed to yield his allegiance to the Romans ; but Trajan, in commencing his descent on Armenia, expressly declared that he would never suffer a Parthian vassal to reign there. He even picked a quarrel with the sovereign of the petty realm of Osrhoene or Edessa, though the latter only desired to live in friendship alike with Romans and Parthians, agreeably to the situation and interests of his little domain. Parthemasiris sought at first to appease the emperor by submission ; but seeing that the Romans were resolved never to recognise him, he dared every extremity, and met his death in the open field. Armenia became a Roman province.

The sequel of Trajan's first expedition into the East is unknown, and is frequently confounded with the second. We only know with certainty, that he marched from Armenia into Mesopotamia, took cities on the Tigris and Euphrates, and supported the king of Parthia against his own people. The period of his return from this first expedition cannot be fixed with accuracy ; but it is well ascertained, that afterwards he spent some years in Rome. It is not easy to assign the date of his separate undertakings commemorated by medals and historians. His attempt to clear and restore the navigation of the canal of the Babylonian kings, which joined the Euphrates with the Tigris, probably

fell within the period of his first expedition to the East.

In his second expedition, on which he spent nearly three years, he marched through Mesopotamia, conquered the Grecian state of Seleucia, and took the Parthian capital of Ctesiphon, made a Roman province of Assyria, diverged towards Arabia, and reached at last the Persian Gulf. Medals, and romantic tales devised by the spirit of adulation, exaggerated, even to a ludicrous degree, the results of this most pernicious expedition to the Roman empire. The plan of an Indian expedition was even ascribed to Trajan; who is also represented on a medal as giving a king to the Parthians. The latter occurrence, reduced to the plain facts, amounted merely to this, that Trajan caused one of the many pretenders to the Parthian throne to be proclaimed king in Ctesiphon, which the Parthians held a sufficient cause for refusing to accept him as their sovereign. Trajan found the East less prone to subjection than he had found the Dacians; and even the Grecian states which still existed in Upper Asia chose to obey the Parthians rather than the Romans. While Trajan remained with his forces at the Arabian Schatul, all the nations and towns in his rear revolted from the Romans. The Jews rebelled against persecutions which fell upon them alike with the Christians. The little state of Edessa, and the commonwealth of Seleucia, strove to recover their freedom and their former constitution. The conqueror of the Mardians, Lusius Quintus, was commissioned to reduce Nisibis. He stormed and wasted with fire and sword the flourishing town of Edessa. Erucius Clarus and Julius Alexander took forcible possession of Seleucia: all Assyria had revolted, and was again reduced to subjection.

Latterly Trajan reaped the fruits of his ill-judged rage for conquest. A fortified place in the desert, called by the Greeks Atra, resisted all his attacks, and those of his general Severus. Here he fell sick, probably by reason of the privations and hardships which he had to

endure during the course of the siege. He provided himself with a decent pretext for giving up his undertakings by procuring his recall from the senate, leaving his army and the administration of Syria to his relation Hadrian. Death however surprised him before he could even embark for Italy, and, if Dio Cassius is to be trusted, before he had named his successor. Plotina, the wife of Trajan, who had always espoused Hadrian's interests, most probably forged the act of adoption in Trajan's name, after his death: however, Hadrian, who was then at Antioch, received the notification of his appointment to the imperial succession ^{A. D.} on the 9th of August, and the intelligence of Trajan's ^{117.} death on the 11th.

CHAP. IV.

HADRIAN.

A SINGLE glance at the general state of the empire, and the posture of affairs in the East at the time of the death of Trajan, is sufficient to show the injustice of the imputation cast on his successor, that envy alone prompted him to abandon Trajan's conquests, and again to fix the Euphrates as the boundary of the empire. The new emperor remained in the East in person till the following year, but could not prevent the Parthians, with Chosroes at their head, from reappearing on the Tigris. Armenia revolted from Rome, and disturbances still prevailed in Palestine. Hadrian could not fail to see the utter impossibility of keeping possession of provinces and kingdoms widely removed by distance, and cut off by seas and deserts from the central seat of government, and moreover in a state of open revolt at the death of Trajan. On his accession Hadrian declined all extraordinary distinctions, testified the deepest veneration for the senate, and declared that he regarded his powers as solely derived from that body. His character and government were a singular compound of good and evil, of wise administration and irrational caprices, of acts of signal clemency and unjustifiable rigour, of zeal for taste and science, and persecution of men of real merit, while favours were lavished on pedantry and frivolous research. He at first appointed his former tutor, Atianus or Tatianus, and Similis, a statesman worthy of better times, as prefects, in order to throw on the first the odium of all the rigours which he might exercise, and to appropriate the honour due to the virtues of the second. The noble Similis could not long endure the atmosphere of a court, where hypocrisy and dissimulation flourished,

where mean-souled pedants and flatterers swarmed, where all virtues were talked of, and all petty passions indulged. Nearly at the same time with his colleague Tatianus was compelled to resign his office, as Hadrian attempted to throw upon him the obloquy of the executions done by his own orders. About the third year of his reign, Hadrian rid himself by death of almost all who might put forth rival pretensions to the imperial dignity. It may suffice to notice a few of the more distinguished heads, among many. Lusius Quintus, a native of Mauritania, who had performed distinguished services at the head of his countrymen in the Dacian, and even more in the Parthian, wars, had been placed by Trajan in the office of governor of Palestine. From this office he was removed by Hadrian's jealousy, and afterwards put to death. Cornelius Palma had enjoyed the particular favour of Trajan, had been promoted to the governorship of Syria, and had conducted a successful campaign against the Petræan Arabs. He, too, seemed to Hadrian too formidably eminent to remain a faithful subject; and his fate was sealed. In like manner Celsus had been one of Trajan's truest friends, and statues had been raised to him and Palma by the late emperor. This was ground sufficient for the fatal umbrage of Hadrian. Nigrinus had been tribune of the people under Trajan, and supported in the senate what he deemed the popular interests. Through his representations to the emperor it was decreed that those eminent men who, according to old usage, were accustomed to plead in behalf of their fellow-citizens in courts of justice, should be prohibited from making a trade of this honourable duty, although they were allowed to receive a present from those whose suit they had won. He too seemed a man of too much consequence to be suffered to live in the reign of a prince resolved to shine alone. Many men of letters, whose vanity clashed with his, had the same fate; and Trajan's renowned architect, Artemidorus of Damascus, who had built the bridge across the Danube, and many other

magnificent works, was first banished and finally despatched out of the world by Hadrian, for having shown dissatisfaction with his temple of Apollo, and for having ventured to criticise it, unfortunately with too much justice.

Hadrian seldom resided in Rome, but travelled for the most part from one province to another. Under his reign, however, as under that of Trajan, the emperor's absence was less perceived than under other princes, as the senate enjoyed the highest consideration, and included the richest and most respected families in the empire. To the provinces, on the other hand, the presence of the emperor was the more advantageous, as Hadrian maintained a strict surveillance over the armies and their generals, the governors and officers of finance, and seemed to take a personal and peculiar pride in embellishing the provincial capitals with public works and monuments.

Immediately on his arrival from the East, where he had lingered for a whole year after the death of Trajan, he travelled to the Rhine, to Gaul, to Spain, to Britain, and afterwards he visited the coast of Africa. At a later period he visited all Asia Minor, Cilicia, Lycia, Pamphylia, proceeded to Trebizond, and sojourned for some time in Cappadocia. He next spent an entire winter in Athens; visited all the islands of the Grecian archipelago, together with Achaia and Eubœa, and finally returned to Rome by Sicily. His second grand tour led him through Athens to the East, where he endeavoured to keep by means of treaties and presents what Trajan had acquired by force of arms. From the borders of Armenia he proceeded to Egypt, through Syria and Palestine. In Egypt he remained a year; and his residence in that country, as well as in Athens, formed an epoch in the moral history of the times. It is evident that the glozing arts of the priests, mystagogues, and pedants, who surrounded him in Athens and in Egypt, rendered his temper still more harsh, intolerant, envious, and hostile to all indications of free-

dom of thought than ever. Under his reign Judea was again the theatre of dreadful devastations and cruelties ; and the Jews who had returned to their native country were again scattered.

In the former reign the Jews, as well as the Christians, who were regarded as a Jewish sect, had been greatly oppressed and persecuted in almost every division of the empire ; especially, however, in the eastern provinces. Accordingly, every year brought with it widely-spread disturbances in some province, or tumults at least in particular towns and districts. Strong measures continually created occasion for strong measures ; till, after the last revolt of the Jews in Palestine and on the Euphrates, Trajan committed the military and civil power over Palestine to the Mauritanian, Lusius Quintus, who had put down the revolt by the sword, and kept the Jews under the yoke by truly African measures. We have already seen that Lusius did not hold his government long under Hadrian. It would seem that a milder policy was pursued for some time towards the Jews, for the population of Palestine increased under the new reign ; and we hear of no disturbances till towards its termination, when Hadrian took a fancy to plant a Roman colony in Jerusalem.

The news of the pollution of Zion by the building of a new town (*Ælia*), the name of which should henceforth supersede that of the holy city, exasperated the whole Jewish nation, who flocked together from all quarters to Palestine, and rallied round a Messiah who was declared to be the true one by one of their most eminent rabbins. The new Messiah, who was called by his countrymen Barchocheba, or Bar Chozba, spirited up the Jews to the most furious resistance, which was maintained almost as obstinately as formerly against Titus, and involved the remaining towns and population in the same ruin. A new town was, indeed, founded on the ancient site of Jerusalem, and was known at first by the new name of *Ælia Capitolina* ; but the old appellation soon became the only one in use.

Julius Severus, one of the bravest of those officers to whom the envy and jealousy of the emperor had not proved fatal, was recalled from Britain to bring the war to a close ; and it was three years before even he could crush the Jewish insurgents.

Hadrian was by no means ambitious of military glory. In Britain he built a wall against the incursions of the Picts and Scots, and sometimes was not ashamed to purchase peace of the barbarians. The brightest side of his government was the administration of justice ; as his decrees not only rendered the forms and principles of procedure uniform, but awarded to the great jurists a seat and vote in the highest matters which came before his own tribunal ; whereas, previously, the emperor's assessors had been chosen, without any sort of reference to legal knowledge, from amongst their personal friends, or their connections. The weaknesses and the cruelties of Hadrian, like many of his virtues, were the offspring of his vanity. He was determined to know every thing, conduct every thing, shine in every thing ; and thus often combined the defects of a pedant in his closet with the foibles contracted amidst the dissipations of the great world. Few men of talent could keep their footing about him. His favour was given either to mere courtiers, or, at best, to persons not above mediocrity, who exalted his merits that theirs might be exalted by him in turn.

Even in the election of a successor, he was blindly led by personal inclination to adopt as a son Cesonius Commodus Verus. Knowing well, however, that the better class were displeased with his choice, he strove to gain the populace by gratuities, the soldiers by a liberal donative ; and as Verus happened to die immediately afterwards, he loudly complained that he had spent enormous sums to no purpose. After the death of Verus, chance guided his second choice more happily. Arrius Antoninus, afterwards surnamed Pius, was a man especially fitted for the duties of government. He was, however, only adopted on condition of

declaring as his successors Antoninus Verus and Marcus Aurelius, two persons of totally opposite character.

In his latter years Hadrian was infirm, and rendered morose by infirmity, cruel by his moroseness, and detested for his cruelties. His bodily ailments he partly brought on himself by aping Trajan's hardihood, without possessing his strength of constitution. He thought proper to expose himself, as Trajan had done, with uncovered head to every inclemency of the weather. Immediately upon Hadrian's death the senate declared null and void all the regulations (*acta*) of the latter years of his reign, and would even have deprived his shade of the ordinary divine honours, had not Antoninus earned for himself the surname of the Pious, by inducing them to renounce all such derogatory measures.

The influence of Stoicism, of Platonism, and of that mysticism which took rise in the East, became, since the time of Hadrian, so perceptible, his successors were so visibly led by the maxims of the schools to which they or their instructors belonged, that before we detail the events of their reigns, it may be well to take a view of the influence exercised by men of learning, such as Favorinus, Plutarch, and Arrian, in the time of Hadrian. Favorinus, master alike of Greek and Latin, an author in both languages, himself versed in all the learning of his times, and connected with men of learning in all the various departments of literature, was Hadrian's inseparable companion, and recommended those whom he deemed worthy to the imperial liberalities and favours. Favorinus, like his emperor, had a rage for encyclopedic acquirement, for antique mysteries, for strange interpretations of the most natural things in the world, for mysteries, initiations, magical arts, &c. &c. It is easy to imagine what sort of persons and sciences he would patronise. Plutarch, a man of learning of the same stamp, who played a part in the state under this government, had already withdrawn from the occupation of public teaching in Rome,

before the accession of Hadrian to the imperial dignity. He was employed by that emperor, especially in the land of his birth, and did the choice of the emperor, and the philosophy which he professed, much honour. It was he who chiefly nourished the taste of Hadrian for occult science, and the mysterious interpretation of ancient art and poetry ; and he afterwards exerted very considerable influence in the mental cultivation of his successor. Men like Plutarch, useful in the practical affairs of life, highly influential as authors, and still more so as friends of the emperor, directing his choice of teachers and writers worthy of his imperial favour, had every opportunity of commending their views of life and mankind to the languid approbation of a refined and enervated community, opposite as they were, in many respects, to those which had led old Rome to greatness.

It is honourable to Hadrian, it was fortunate for the empire, that while he patronised inquiries of a less solid description, he promoted the introduction of the maxims of the Stoic philosophy, and even paved the way for their approach to the throne. We shall find the first of the Antonines preferring the Stoic to all other teachers ; we shall find the second regulating his whole life and administration according to the stoical system. That system, which had almost become obsolete, was indebted for its fresh renown to Epictetus and Arrian. The former never acquired any personal influence over Hadrian. Arrian had conceived an admiration of Epictetus, from the proofs afforded by his life, not less than by his precepts, that the doctrine of Zeno concerning the insignificance of external ills, while a consciousness exists of the inward dignity of human nature, was no dream, no empty speculation. Arrian was thus induced to assume the task of interpreting the doctrines of his master, the restorer and reformer of Stoicism. He did not, however, merely teach the principles of Stoic philosophy, but brought these principles into practice, and applied them to the public service with equal judgment

in military and civil administration. His philosophy taught him the duty of action ; of taking a vigorous part in life ; of self-denial and self-sacrifice ; and his example showed that philosophy does not render her pupils unfit for affairs. Arrian was conversant with military matters ; his writings on these subjects are the result of his personal experience in the expeditions against the Alani, the conduct of which was intrusted to him. Having shown, in his history of Alexander, acquaintance with administrative details, Hadrian installed him in the government of Cappadocia and the provinces on the Euxine.

The administration of the state, and the practical applications of science, had never been carried to greater perfection than under the reign of Hadrian ; who, though he shunned the extension of the empire, failed not to guard its limits from the inroads of the rude northern and eastern populations, who pressed closer and closer on the frontiers, and looked on the flourishing provinces of Rome with eyes of fierce avidity. Hadrian marched in person to meet the inroads of the Roxolani and other Sarmatian tribes on the Roman province of Mœsia ; while he devolved the duty of quelling the Caucasian Alani on Arrian.

CHAP. V.

VIEW OF LIFE AND MANNERS FROM TIBERIUS TO ANTONINUS
PIUS.

THE colours with which satirists and historians have overlaid their pictures of life and government during the period before us are darker than in justice they should be. Most of them exhibit deep disgust of their contemporaries, and erect, as their sole standard for the estimation of human dealings, the times of primitive Roman simplicity and poetical Grecian heroism. We must therefore adopt with extreme caution the representations of such writers. There is, however, a broad line of distinction, which cannot be mistaken, between the corruption of the higher and oppression of the lower classes in the times of which we are treating, and similar states of things at other times. Rome had enjoyed a free constitution: the cities and states which formed her provinces had franchises and immunities of their own; a national religion existed, the influence of which upon the constitution, administration, and social life has been mentioned elsewhere. All this was existing still in external form and aspect, but was practically nullified by the realities of absolute monarchy, which equally disregarded law and charter. The old religion had lost its social influence, and Christianity had not yet acquired political importance. This extraordinary mixture of republican forms with despotic practices, of republican simplicity with oriental courtiership, gives features wholly peculiar to the system of life in these times.

It is true that, under the empire, checks were given to the capricious tyranny which had been exercised in republican times by the governors of the provinces; yet the higher posts of provincial administration still

remained the source of immense revenues to a few families, and the capital still drained the wealth of the provinces as formerly. It was one of the greatest merits of Vespasian, Trajan, and Hadrian, that they set bounds to subordinate oppressions. We learn from Pliny's letters to what a pitch that oppression was carried, and how difficult it was to call a powerful transgressor to account. Juvenal mentions in many places the plunder of the provinces; and while he admits that now and then a prefect met with condign punishment, he states that ten escaped for every one that was brought to justice.*

Tacitus has shown, in his "Life of Agricola," to what a pitch these functionaries carried their oppressions in districts which were not as yet accustomed to the Roman yoke, and in which therefore prudence alone might have recommended the utmost caution. The mode of administration introduced by the biographer's hero stands out in striking contrast from the customary and hacknied practice.† First of all, Agricola kept his own house and people in order, which most men find a harder task than to regulate whole provinces. He suffered none but domestic matters to be transacted by slaves or freedmen, and never allowed those whom he employed in state affairs to be thrust upon him by family connections, requests, or recommendations. We learn from the same authority, that the emperors applied to their prefects, and the latter to their subordinate officers, similar rules of policy to those which are observed by Turkish sovereigns towards their pachas; that is to say, they gave full swing to their extortions, and then swept the amount into their own treasury. Tacitus says, that Agricola preferred to employ persons in the department of col-

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— "Quam fulmine justo
Et Capito et Tutor ruerint damnante senatu
Piratæ Cilicum. Sed quid damnatio confert,
Cum Pansa eripiat quicquid tibi Natta reliquit."

Juv. Sat. viii.

† Tacit. Agric. c. 19.

lecting the revenue, of whom he could be confident they would commit no malversation, than persons whose transgressions he could afterwards punish. He endeavoured to alleviate the pressure of extraordinary requisitions, whether of money or grain, by providing for their equal distribution, and especially by tolerating none of the tricks which enriched subordinates, and which were much more oppressive even than the requisitions themselves. As an example of such tricks, it may be mentioned, that in Britain deliveries of grain were required to be made at great distances; and people who were forced to sell their own corn cheap at home were compelled to pay dear for the same commodity in another place, in order to comply with the terms of the public requisition.

We must not, however, lose sight of the better side of monarchical government, especially when a good prince happened to be on the throne, and delegated powers were held by upright men in the provinces. The strict superintendence and decisive will of a monarch had become indispensably necessary everywhere, since patriotism had yielded to petty, personal, and family interests. Thus, for example, the towns of Asia Minor enjoyed many immunities, which had been granted and confirmed at different times. Against the violation of these the emperors generally provided, and committed the decision of doubtful cases to the senate. That body, advised of abuses which had arisen from these privileges, and especially from the right of sanctuary*, instituted a legal investigation of the original documents on which the claim to these privileges was founded. The consuls were commissioned to examine the archives of the towns included in this inquiry, and on finding any flaw in legality (*si qua iniquitas involveretur*), to submit the case to the judgment of the senate. The necessity of some superintendence of the towns, and the present unfitness of regulations which once might have been excellent, are abundantly dis-

* Tacit. *Annal.* lib. iii. c. 60.

played by Pliny, who, as prefect, and as a personal friend of his emperor, had particularly attended to the internal affairs of the towns in Bithynia. In Prusa he found that the revenues of the town were shamefully squandered, owing to an understanding between those who conducted the expenditure and those who audited the accounts.* In Nicomedia, the monies which had been destined to construct an aqueduct had been fraudulently diverted from public uses†: in Nicæa and Claudiopolis, large sums had been unwarrantably lavished on theatres, wrestling schools, and baths. Strict surveillance of authority was obviously necessary to keep in order the magistrates of such towns, or the families which monopolised their local administration; but such surveillance sometimes might be dangerous, and was always troublesome; and particular towns had obtained for themselves the privilege that their accounts should be submitted to no inspection. We learn this from the remonstrance of the city of Apamea against the interference of Pliny; to which Trajan replied, that the mere inspection of their accounts could not possibly intrench on, or be contrary to, their privileges. These privileges very much resembled those of our own corporations, and only so far exceeded them as the Roman senate had less power to deal with vested rights than the English parliament.

The whole administration of the Roman empire would have taken an oriental aspect almost from the outset, had not republican forms been from time to time resumed, and the newly adopted courtly etiquette and ceremonial disused by individual emperors. Under Augustus no trace of court-regulations yet existed: many of the great people around him adopted in their houses far greater formality than he did. Under Tiberius little alteration was made in that respect, though he himself chose to be inaccessible. But the freedmen into whose hands under Caligula and Claudius fell all the transactions of the cabinet, and who monopolised

* Plin. Epist. lib. x. ep. 28. et 34.

† Ibid. ep. 46.

the confidence of the sovereign, presided over a regular court, which acquired by degrees a fixed order. Under the last-named emperor and his successor Nero, first appeared indications of the oriental regimen of a later period. We find subordinate officers stationed to bar the entrance of the palace to all except certain privileged persons; and even these had to undergo a search for concealed weapons. In the interior we find chamberlains, and a high chamberlain, who permitted access to the sovereign only to their own friends, or to persons of a certain rank.* A similar invention to our modern orders and decorations was devised, in order to gratify the vain by outward distinctions; whereas merit had been formerly distinguished by promotion to public offices termed honorary (*honores*). The new decoration consisted in a gold medallion of the emperor set in a ring, and worn upon the finger. The above-mentioned court-functionaries took special care that no one should be allowed to wear this badge of distinction who was not strictly entitled to it; and every one who presumed without special permission to wear it was punished severely.† Vespasian checked the progress of these frivolous innovations; and he and his successor strove, so far as the circumstances permitted, to restore the form of the ancient constitution. Domitian, indeed, re-enacted the Claudian and Neronian follies; but Trajan and his immediate successors trod anew in Vespasian's footsteps.

The elevated sentiments and simple mode of life of the emperors who followed Domitian might have restored the ancient order of things, not only in form but in substance, were re-establishment in such cases as easy as destruction. But a total change of relations had taken place between the ranks of society, as well as in the discipline and order of domestic life. The facility of life which had existed in former times was

* The slaves or freedmen who exercised this function Seneca calls '*cohortem interioris admissionis*'. The office we have distinguished by the title of high chamberlain was designated in later times *magister admissionum*. The *thing* was introduced in the times of Claudius and Nero; the title is of later invention.

† Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. xxxiii. c. 12.

gone. Every one who aimed at the distinctions of society must be prepared with the means of satisfying certain artificial wants, and of following certain artificial fashions. The man of wealth and power stood far remote from his poorer client; and, as in modern times, every other consideration was merged in anxious care for the means of respectable existence. In former times, and even under Tiberius, the different styles of dress, of fare, of furniture, and domestic establishment, created no distinctions of rank; it was even esteemed more honourable, in all these arrangements, to cultivate the old Roman simplicity, than to make an ostentatious display; and in this respect Tiberius himself, as Tacitus remarks, adhered to the ancient usages: however he might swerve from them in other respects, he was frugal at least. In Martial's representations of his own times, the Roman mode of living had more resemblance to that of modern times. Whether the toga was made of Laconian, or Parmesan, or of coarser wool*; whether the dye of the cloak was genuine purple, or some cheap imitation; are treated of as points of high importance. The case was the same with household furniture—a table of the thuja root, with a claw of silver or ivory, marked the man of correct breeding: he whose table was beech or oak could have no admittance to good society.† In the same manner cookery and plate were matters of great moment: sea-fish could only be served up to a man of rank on golden dishes, set with precious stones; and his banqueting halls were filled with troops of attendants.‡

All the families of the first rank, says Tacitus, during the reigns of the first Cæsars, ruined themselves by the extravagant expense of their table and general mode of living, because it was still permitted, under

* Mart. Epigr. lib. ii. ep. 43.

† The poet adds, that his wretched table does not even stand fast:—

“ Tu Libycos Indis suspendis dentibus orbes,
Fuleitur testa fagina mensa mihi.”

‡ “ Grex tuus Iliaco poterat certare einædo,
At mihi succurrit pro Ganymede manus.”—*Mart.* l. c. v. 14.

those reigns, to cultivate popularity at home, and establish connections with foreign princes and whole provinces by largesses and lavish hospitalities. This required a princely expenditure: the great man's whole establishment must be placed upon a footing to excite the admiration of clients and foreigners. When the reign of terror and massacre commenced, when high repute and celebrity became suspicious qualities, the line of moderation (*sapientiæ*) was adopted; and retrenchments were made in the former scale of expenditure. Moreover, since that period, persons obtained admission into the senate who in point of fact were not Romans, but citizens of the free towns, of the colonies, or even of the provinces; and who brought the prudent habits which they had practised at home into the capital. Though many of these senators acquired wealth in their later years, yet, on the whole, they still adhered to their old customs. Vespasian, in particular, says Tacitus, in these respects gave an improved tone to Roman society. His whole external arrangements, his table, and mode of living, were adapted to the sobriety of strict and ancient usage; and, since Domitian was followed by a long succession of princes, who in this respect resembled Vespasian, the reformation of manners which he had commenced continued its progress.

It has already been mentioned, that rank lost its importance since freedmen came to amass enormous riches, to take the supreme conduct of the government, and to look upon the senators as their creatures. The wealth of a Pallas, Callistus, Narcissus, says Pliny*, was, beyond comparison, greater than that of Crassus, whose opulence had in earlier times passed into a proverb. A person who had only the amount of property which qualified, of old, for equestrian rank, must have stood in a somewhat similar relation to a man like Caius Claudius Isidorus, of whom Pliny has made particular mention, as a Russian noble of moderate possessions to a Demidoff. The number of equestrians who actually

* Hist. Nat. lib. xxxiii. c. 47.

did not possess the legal qualification, but were smuggled in as it were by trick, or kept their place on the roll by favour, or had received from imperial bounty the necessary sum to support their title, was extremely great. Accordingly, the equestrian order, or inferior nobility, entirely lost its ancient importance. It appears, from the writers of those times, that the lowered value of money reduced to an insignificant sum the equestrian qualification; that the great men raised their dependants to that rank; and that many forced themselves into it by sheer begging. Martial, in particular, begged and sued in the most degrading manner, with the shameless importunity of a Peter Aretin, and railed at those who did not give with sufficient liberality in almost every book of his epigrams. Juvenal, in a passage where he complains that prostitution alone received rewards from the great men of his age, twits them with having no scruple to elevate any trumpeter or horn-blower to equestrian rank, if he had but served their infamous lusts.* Pliny's letters afford an example of elevation to that rank from less dishonourable motives, but still as an instance of lordly patronage.†

Petronius has delineated the mode of life of the Roman grandees. We learn also from Juvenal, that the arrangements of the table, and the art of carving, were taught in Rome in celebrated schools, and practised on wooden imitations of different sorts of viands.‡ Petronius describes the carvers as a sort of pantomimic

* "Quadringenta dedit Gracchus sestertia dotem
Cornicini, sive hic recto cantaverat ære."

Juv. Sat. ii. v. 117.

† This person was one Romanus Firmus, an old acquaintance and fellow townsman of Pliny, who writes to him as follows with regard to the conduct which he expects of him in acknowledgment of benefit received: — "Te memorem hujus muneris amicitiae nostræ diuturnitas spondet. Ego ne illud quidem admoneo, quod admonere deberem, nisi te scirem sponte facturum, ut dignitate a me data quam modestissime, ut a me data, utare;" &c. &c.

‡ "Sed nec structor erit, cui cedere debeat omnis
Pergula, discipulus Tripheri doctoris, apud quem
Lumine cum magno lepus atque aper et pygargus,
Et Scythicæ vulveres et phænicopterus ingens,
Et Gætulus oryx, hebeti lautissima ferro
Cæditur, et totâ sonat ulmea cœna Suburrâ."

Juv. Sat. xi. v. 136.

performers, who entertained the society with motions of their hands and arms, in time to a musical accompaniment, and astonished them by the dexterity with which they performed their work of dissection.* The expenses incurred in building country-houses, baths, and palaces, kept pace with those of the table, and of the general establishment†; and none of the minor arts were wanting, by which life is embellished in times when civilisation musters all its vices and virtues, and encourages all the departments of art and industry through which wealth spreads downwards, from the higher to the middling, and even to the lower classes, raising the latter to far higher importance in the social scale than belonged to them in earlier times.

The stimulus given to other occupations by a luxurious capital extended, in an especial manner, to those connected with architecture. The edifices of older times were designed less for the uses of private life than for the service of the gods, or of the commonwealth. Temples, monuments, halls, aqueducts, and theatres, were then erected, instead of piles for private splendour and luxury. Times were, however, altered now. Palaces resembling towns, a description which especially applies to the *golden house* of Nero, country-houses of vast extent, baths, and other structures destined for personal and direct utility, were erected in greater numbers than at any former period. Meanwhile public works, highways, bridges, canals, and harbours, if no longer projected by the civic spirit of former times, as offerings to the glory of the commonwealth, were actively promoted by the better class of provincial governors; and still more by the zeal for improvement or vanity of successive emperors. Passing over the public works undertaken by earlier emperors (some of the more important of which have been mentioned in the foregoing pages), we would pause

* "Processit statim scissor et ad symphoniam ita gesticulatus laceravit obsonium, ut putares Darium hydraule cantante pugnare." — *Petr. Sat.* p. 63.

† *Juv. Sat.* xiv. v. 8. et seq.

to notice the great undertakings accomplished under the reign of Trajan; especially the magnificent highway, extending from the farthest extremity of the provinces on the Black Sea into Gaul; and the library which bore his name, and remained, till the age of Constantine, the principal public library in Rome. In Mœsia and Dacia, in Bithynia, Spain, and Lusitania, Trajan either himself directed the execution of public works, such as bridges, roads, and canals, or at least encouraged provinces and cities to conduct such undertakings on their own account. Hadrian built at a furious rate. Temples, aqueducts, bridges, libraries, were reared by his directions in Rome, in Athens; in every place, to be brief, which he delighted to honour. Even Egypt, where there were almost too many old buildings, he loaded with new; founded a new city; and favoured with new endowments and new buildings the museum of Alexandria, already an opulent institution. He chose the site for his own monument by the bridge which he built over the Tiber, and there erected a pile which from the first resembled a fortress, and which serves the purpose of one at the present day. Imperial magnificence was emulated; and many splendid piles were reared by wealthy individuals; so that Juvenal, apparently with reason, refers to the rage for building (especially country-houses) the ruin of great families. How far fools were likely to push extravagance in point of building, may best be inferred from the celebrated description which has been given of his country-house by Pliny, one of the wisest and best men to be found in the whole imperial annals.

The whole system of social life, in these times, became dependent on the emperor's "high personality;" and even the more enlightened class of rulers could restore nothing like freedom of movement or action in a population which was ready to flatter every tyrant, and every vice of every tyrant, in order to obtain the means of luxurious enjoyment. The centralisation of all power in the courtly focus was farther promoted

by all the monarchical establishments, even those of prime celebrity, which were founded from the times of Vespasian down to those of the Antonines. Of this a few may be cited, out of innumerable examples. Salaried officers, properly so called, were rare in earlier times. Indemnification, indeed, was given for time and expense in public business ; but a profession and a maintenance could only be sought in private pursuits. A total change took place in this respect since the times of Vespasian. That even superior officers received salaries since those times, clearly appears from a passage in Pliny's epistles, where he refers a case, relating to the payment of an officer's salary, to the decision of the emperor and the senate. The functionary, concerning whose pay the question had arisen, was the principal law officer of the quæstor of a province, who was designated only by the humble title of *scriba*. That officer died before the expiration of the term at which his annual salary, payable by the quæstor, became due ; and the quæstor was uncertain to whom he should pay the amount, which was claimed at once by the heir and the public treasury. The senate decided in favour of the treasury.*

As public men, so professors of science, became dependent on government. Teachers received salaries, scholars stipends, and endowments were founded by the emperors and by wealthy individuals. Not only individual men of learning received pensions ; not only institutions like the learned academies of our times, such as the museum of Alexandria, were supported by public grants ; but even common private schools were dependent for their permanence on payments from the treasury. Thus education ceased to be the concern of individuals, and became a matter of public regulation. This change was undoubtedly advantageous in some points of view, and harmonised completely with the genius of an absolute monarchy ; but, on the other hand, it naturalised, for the first time, in the schools of an-

* Plin. Epist. lib. iv. ep. 12.

tiquity, that formal and mechanical routine, the curse of modern establishments. A single instance may serve to show the nature of the evils which arose from the endowment of public schools and the payment of public teachers. Pliny came to Como, where he played a somewhat similar part to that which is assumed by a petty prince or noble in modern times in the village or town which belongs to him, or in whose neighbourhood he has large estates. His fellow-townsmen wait upon him, and amongst them a youth who had studied at Milan, because there was no institution for the higher branches of science at Como. Hereupon Pliny urges the town of Como to establish and pay teachers of their own ; offers himself to contribute a considerable sum for the endowment of an institution of the kind which was deficient, and writes to devolve on Tacitus the commission of looking out for teachers ; declaring that he would willingly advance the whole amount required, if he were not afraid that an institution thus richly endowed by him, might turn out like other foundations of the same kind, to the support of which those for whose advantage they existed were not called on to pay any direct contribution.* It appears that many endowments existed in which the teachers received salaries, but that these funds were too frequently diverted to the uses of the relations and dependants of the patrons or the magistracy. Consequently, Pliny's intention was, that his fellow townsmen should subscribe to the new institution, and in return elect their own professors ; as then they would be sure to take care that a proper use was made of their money.

The support of libraries, orphan asylums, and other charitable endowments, even before Christianity enforced it as a religious duty, engaged in the times of which we treat the attention of the government, as well as of private persons who aimed at a nobler immortality

* " Totum enim pollicerer nisi timerem, ne hoc munus meum quandoque ambitu corrumpetur, ut accidere multis in locis video, in quibus præceptores publici conducuntur." — *Plin. Ep. lib. iv. ep. 13.*

than such as could be bought by the establishment of public games. Pliny himself states the amount of his bounty to an orphan establishment: he assigned for its support the rents of a highly productive property*, considering that he thus made the best possible provision for the maintenance of the charity and the due cultivation of the estate.

It is obvious that intestine commotions, impoverishment of the towns, barbarian inroads, and all the other evils which shortly beset the empire, were of necessity the more ruinous in their consequences the more individuals gradually accustomed themselves to look for the supply of their private wants to public sources, and that a moment's failure of these sources might stop the whole machine. Augustus had begun by greatly diminishing the number of citizens to whom corn was gratuitously distributed; but he afterwards allowed them to increase again to 200,000, as he thought it better policy to conciliate stout *lazzaroni* at the expense of the respectable citizens, than to surround himself with guards, and play the military despot unmasked. On no occasion, however, did he distribute for life those tablets which entitled the holder to receive a certain portion of bread or grain, but a new one must be applied for once a month, or at least thrice a year. Nevertheless, these excessive largesses attracted from all parts people into the city, who renounced labour and relied on the public granaries for subsistence. Philo states, in the account of his embassy to Caligula, that even his Jewish countrymen had a share of these gratuities; and that when the *pay-day* fell upon the Sabbath, it was held to be the duty of the officers charged with the distribution to pay the Jews their quota on the following day.

Trajan, with the best intentions, introduced a fresh nuisance; the effect of which must have resembled that

* "Pro quingentis milibus nummum, quæ in alimenta ingenuorum promiseram, agrum ex meis, longe pluris, actori publico mancipavi."—*Plin. Epist.* lib. iii. ep. 8.

of the English poor laws. He added 5000 children to the numbers to whom grain was distributed, and had their names inscribed in books or on copper plates, in order that the distributors might know them. This conduct found imitators, as we have seen in the instance of Pliny. Hadrian immediately on his accession increased the amount of the distribution and the numbers of those entitled to it.* Antoninus and L. Verus gave still farther extension to these burthensome liberalities; and permitted to partake in them, not only the sons, but also the daughters, of citizens, including those who had only recently gained their manumission.†

If Hadrian and the first Antoninus exercised a strenuous control over the administration of justice, the crying abuses which had crept in justified their interference. Fees and perquisites of all sorts had sprouted up under various pretexts, of which nothing was known in ancient Rome. Juvenal paints advocates at once rapacious and ostentatious, who pleaded for pay, not as before for honour, and sought to make a great appearance of opulence and station, in order to get higher fees from their clients. "The best speaker," says Juvenal, "if he appears with modest exterior, will be fobbed off with a present of fruit or vegetables, or fish, or perhaps with a few bottles of wine; or if he ever gets gold, he has to divide it with notaries and attorneys."‡ Rich presents and high fees he only receives who makes a figure beyond his means, whose ancestors and their triumphal trophies stand him in the

* "Pueris ac puellis, quibus etiam Trajanus alimenta detulerat, incrementum liberalitatis adiecit" — *Æl. Spart. Adrian. c. vi.*

† "Ob hanc conjunctionem pueros et puellas novorum hominum frumentariæ perceptioni adscribi præceperunt." — *Jul. Capitolin. in M. Anton. Philos. c. vii.*

‡ "Rumpe miser tensus jecur, ut tibi lasso
Figantur virides, scalarum gloria, palmæ.
Quid vocis pretium? Siccus petasunculus et vas
Pelamydum, aut veteres Afrorum epimènia, bulbi,
Aut vinum Tiberi devectum, quinque lagenæ.
Si quater egisti, si contigit aureus unus,
Indecadunt partes in fœdere pragmaticorum."

Juv. Sat. vii. v. 117.

stead of personal merit, and who turns into a trade that which those ancestors viewed as a civic duty.*

With regard to other public burthens, the forced labour on the roads, the requisitions of the imperial posts, the exactions of subordinate officers, the passage of troops, and the journies of the emperors, grew more and more onerous. We learn from medals, that Nerva relieved the inhabitants of Italy from the burthensome service of forwarding the imperial treasures, despatches, baggage, and persons who were privileged to travel free. Hadrian even intended, what however he never executed, to take the whole expense of the imperial post on the treasury. The journies of former princes had been worse than a new tax to the districts which they passed through: every thing they stood in need of was put in requisition, so that their stay in any particular place ruined the whole neighbourhood. Of Domitian's journies, Pliny says expressly that they were viewed as a regular public scourge and pestilence, and justly so; for he everywhere ousted the tenants of the principal houses, where he thought proper to quarter himself and his suite, and carried off, or at least allowed his followers to carry off, the furniture, slaves, and cattle of the owners.† Trajan and Hadrian, indeed, travelled after a different fashion; yet the emperor Antoninus affirmed that even their journeys oppressed the provinces.‡

The progressive increase in public expenditure, even

* "Emturus pucros, argentum, myrrhina, villas,
Spondet enim Tyrio st:etaria purpura filo.
Et tamen hoc ipsis est utile, purpura vendit
Causidicum, vendunt amethystina, convenit illis
Et strepitu et facie majoris vivere census.
Sed finem impensæ non servat prodiga Roma.
Ut redeant veteres; Ciceroni nemo ducentos
Nunc dederit nummos, nisi fulserit annulus ingens."

Juv. Sat. v. 133.

† "Quam dissimilis nuper alterius principis transitus, si tamen transitus ille, non populatio fuit, quam abactus hospitum exercebat, omniaque dextra lævaque perusta et attrita, ut si vis aliqua, vel ipsi illi barbari, quos fugiebat, inciderent." — *Plin. Panegyric. c. xx.*

‡ "Nec ulla expeditione obiit (Antoninus), nisi quod ad agros suos provectus est, et ad Campaniam, dicens, gravem esse provincialibus comitatum principis etiam nimis parci." — *Jul. Capitol. Antonin. Pius, c. vii.*

under the best princes, rendered a new and oppressive scheme of taxation unavoidable. Public games, such as were held by Nero and Domitian, continued to be held, as required for the glory of their administration, by the soberest and most economical emperors: such exhibitions, however, called for extraordinary resources, and swallowed up all previous savings.

The system of taxation, which we have mentioned in a former chapter as originally adopted by Caligula, was too convenient not to be persisted in by subsequent rulers, even though particular imposts were taken off from time to time. The taxes on law proceedings, for instance, which Caius had imposed, were abolished in the next reign; while the tax of the fortieth penny on every purchase and sale, or other conveyance of property, was retained. Nero took it off, but soon reimposed it; Galba again relinquished it; but Vespasian found it could not be dispensed with, and levied it once more. The case was the same with the tax upon successions, and on the sale of slaves. The former tax was limited by Trajan to such transmissions of property as were made not to the nearest in blood; new modifications of it were introduced by Antoninus, who was surnamed the Philosopher. In a state where every thing had to be cared for and regulated by government, where no individual viewed the public interests as his own, it was impossible for the best prince, with the best disposition to do so, to raise an adequate revenue except by the most tyrannical means. Extraordinary commissions for the reduction of public expenditure, such as Trajan appointed (*quinqueviri ad minuendos sumtus*), availed not much. The provinces not only suffered from the ever-increasing pressure of taxes, but from the loans which they were forced to receive from wealthy Romans or banking companies, who had at any time the power of calling in capital and interest.

It has already been observed, that the increased circulation of money, with the increased demand for the luxuries and conveniences of life, encouraged the branches

of art and trade connected with these objects, and gave employment to numerous hands which would otherwise have been idle. Carriages and litters were roofed in, and had glass windows; the manufacture of silver mirrors, of glass, and especially of crystal, were carried to high perfection, as clearly appears even from the fragments of ancient vessels made of that material. The increased employment of silver in plate and all descriptions of utensils, augmented the number and skill of the workmen in that metal; and the fashion of founding libraries, and of thinking them indispensable to any pretensions to style in private houses, gave importance to the manufacture of paper, and to the book trade.

On the manufacture of paper, of which more frequent use was made than of parchment in the reigns of the later emperors, Pliny (in the thirteenth book of his *Natural History*) has afforded very circumstantial details. He tells us that up to the time of Augustus the Romans were in the habit of using, without any farther preparation, the paper made of papyrus by the Egyptians, which was chiefly manufactured at Alexandria. Under Augustus two new sorts of paper were made in Rome out of the paper called *hieratic*, imported from Egypt. Afterwards, the grammarian Rhennius Fannius Palæmon established in Rome a very extensive paper manufactory, where the inferior paper made at the amphitheatre in Alexandria, and thence named, was worked up into paper of the finest quality. Under Claudius new manufacturing processes were adopted, in all which, however, the Egyptian raw material was made use of.

Of the book trade, we have already remarked that it flourished in Rome in the time of Augustus: since the reign of Vespasian it also became extended over the provinces. Not indigent poets alone, like Martial, who speaks frequently of the price of works, but men of rank and station, were not ashamed to receive remuneration for their writings. The elder Pliny was procurator of Spain when one of his countrymen offered him a

considerable sum for his immense collection of extracts from the books he had read at different times. The diffusion of the book trade more particularly took place in Gaul, where Roman studies were pursued with extraordinary diligence. At Marseilles there was an institution for Greek education and literature, which was visited even in preference to Athens by men of the highest rank. A large institution existed of the same kind at Autun ; and Tacitus calls that city the principal seat of Latin culture. With regard to the book trade of Lyons, we have the younger Pliny's testimony ; for he states that he learned with some surprise from a friend, that his own discourses and writings were publicly sold there.

Taste for art was intimately connected with taste for literature ; and most of the works which have served as models to later artists, belong to the times of which we are now treating. Works of art, especially busts, were essential decorations in libraries. In this, indeed, as in every thing else, luxury ruled paramount, and costliness was often valued far higher than art. Fashion, however, rendered works of art as indispensable as ordinary furniture. Nero carried everywhere about with him in his travels the " Amazon " of the artist Strongyion ; and Caius Cestius, who was consul under the reign of Tiberius, dragged a favourite statue about with him on his campaigns, and into battle.

The progress of luxury in building may be gathered from Pliny's description of his renowned Laurentine villa ; as Pliny certainly did not belong to the number of those lordly spendthrifts who ruined themselves by enormous architectural undertakings. We find from a passage in Pliny's letters, that numerous works of art which had formerly been the ornament of public places and temples, were now buried in private houses and gardens, as many a masterpiece is at this day in the mansions of the English nobility.

According to the uniform testimony of the wisest and best men who adorned the period from Augustus to

Hadrian, a principal source of depravation in taste as well as in morals was, the spectacles and games of the circus. The influence of these sanguinary conflicts on the state of manners has been spoken of in a former part of our work : it remains to be mentioned in this place, that all the emperors since Tiberius seemed to take an interest, not only in satisfying the popular taste for these shows, but in encouraging a numerous attendance. The corrupting effect of these games on the female sex is what is chiefly deplored by the writers of these times ; and this is very conceivable when we reflect on the nature of the pantomimes, and on the sort of musical strains which were imported into Rome from Asia, and, as Juvenal says, especially from Spain. The effect of such amusements on the higher class of females is depicted, in one point of view, by Juvenal in his sixth satire ; in another, by Cæcina, as reported by Tacitus. Here, however, we must not rely too far upon Tacitus or the satirists, whose vocation is to dwell upon the dark side of things. The times of which we are treating afford instances of the fairest fruits of the general aim at mental cultivation ; only, unluckily, we find the better spirits of those times on the false scent which leads to so many pernicious errors in our own days. A relaxed tone of mind, conceit, and unprofitable reveries, originated partly in the imperial times, as in our own, from the over-anxious and sedulous superintendence of accomplished mothers. We learn from scattered passages in Pliny's epistles, that mothers in these times, as well as their counsellors and friends, entertained a settled persuasion that every thing may be drilled into every human being by cultivation ; and that childhood may be moulded at will, and guided in leading-strings up to youth, without losing a jot of original energy, and without being made sick of all intellectual exertion. Examples of success attending this method of culture will scarcely be found in the male sex ; it is otherwise with females. We find in Pliny an instance

of the excellent effects produced by careful training of this sort, which the female sex undoubtedly needs.

It must however be acknowledged, that the ancient education and energies, sincere and heartfelt interest in science and art for their own sake, modes of living simple, yet embellished by all real refinements, had not entirely vanished in the times of which we are treating. We find individual specimens of the old-fashioned activity of pursuits closed by the old-fashioned retirement in advanced age. These traits are the more striking, as they come out quite incidentally, like commonplace and every-day things ; while ill examples are carefully culled by satirists and historians.

In this view should be read Pliny's account of the country life of Spurinna. The old man (of seventy-seven) is represented as dividing his time betwixt the free enjoyment of nature in moderate out-door exercise, reading, writing, composing, and instructive conversation with his friends on scientific subjects. His country estate is tastefully laid out, but not overloaded with the apparatus of luxury : his house stands ever open to a well-selected society ; his table handsomely covered, but at no extravagant cost ; his plate and furniture finished with art, and valuable without ostentation.

Martial gives another example of active life, conducted mainly after the old manner, and reckons, hour by hour, the distribution of time observed by his patron. The first and second hours of the morning are given to the reception of clients ; in the third, he appears either in the seat or at the bar of justice ; in the fifth, he transacts economical or other affairs in the city ; the sixth is sacred to mid-day repose ; in the seventh he despatches any remaining city business ; the eighth is spent in the bath, and in those corporeal exercises which are considered to be healthful after bathing. About nine o'clock in the evening is the set time for the principal meal ; ten is the hour for hearing recitation or reading ; and Martial hopes at this hour to find audience for his epigrams.

While corruption was diffused from Rome to the farthest ends of the ancient world, her literature and language, on the other hand, became objects of universal interest. In Gaul, Britain, and Africa, educational institutions were founded, which disputed the palm with those of Rome and Italy. The disadvantages of general and superficial mental culture, the dissipation of mind, and disinclination for deep study in learners, the vanity and mercenary motives of teachers, are closely linked with the reigning state of literature in those times, and will come again under review in the course of the remarks which we have now to make on the literary character of this period.

CHAP. VI.

LITERATURE.

BEFORE proceeding to treat of the general character, or of the more remarkable performances, of literature in these times, or to estimate the taste then prevalent, indicated by these performances, it may be requisite to cast a glance on the modes of instruction and education, that we may better be able to infer the qualities of the fruit from the seed and from the manner of sowing. We might begin with the delineation made by Juvenal (who has devoted the whole of his seventh satire to this subject) and Persius of the schoolmasters, rhetoricians, and advocates then most in repute, and should find in that delineation a striking resemblance to similar classes daily to be met with in our capitals. But, as the traits might seem too cutting, and the whole too much a caricature, we prefer taking our information from two other works of different dates, and written with a different design. To these we shall add the evidence of a third author, who is for several reasons quite an unexceptionable witness.

In the first place, then, Petronius, a man of the world, and a man of fashion, in the fragment of his work which is extant, introduces his *Encolpius* expatiating in colloquy, with not less bitter contempt than Juvenal, on the empty declamation of the rhetoricians and their schools, in which the most out-of-the-way subjects are treated without the slightest regard to nature or probability.* His account of the scholastic

* Juvenal describes these puerile exercises in his seventh satire :

“ Declamare doces ? O ferrea pectora, Vecti,
 Cum perimit sævos classis numerosa tyrannos.
 Nam quæcunque sedens modo legerat, eadem stans
 Proferet, atque eadem cantabit versibus isdem ;
 Occidit miseros crambe repetita magistros.”

training of those times coincides exactly with the indications given by Persius, with Quintilian's more detailed evidence, and with what is made out by historical examples from his own times by the author of the admirable dialogue, *De Oratoribus*, frequently attributed to Tacitus. Persius derides the forensic eloquence, which diffuses itself in lengthy antithetical excursions, when the case turns on some simple matter of fact. Seneca tells Cestius, the most popular teacher of his times, to his face, in his own school, that he will prove to him before all his scholars how void of taste is his whole system of rhetoric.* Quintilian expressly contrasts with the method of Cestius his own advice, that the orator should form himself by practising on real cases after existing models.†

The author of the dialogue *De Oratoribus*, who examines the individual characteristics of false eloquence, and sets forth the method of older times in contrast with the new, corroborates the foregoing representations.‡ He investigates historically the labours of his own times, mentions by name distinguished individuals, and lastly, describes the exercises generally prescribed to youth.§ Here we find the same causes at work which, in our own times, produce the same effects under similar circumstances. Parents are eager to see their sons placed as early as possible in some employ-

* Wolf has made use of this anecdote, as illustrative of these times, in the preface to his edition of the four discourses ascribed to Cicero, published in Berlin, 1801.

† “ Et quod in gladiatoribus fieri videmus, in rebus actis exerceatur: ut fecisse Brutum diximus pro Milone. Melius hoc quam rescribere veteribus orationibus, ut fecit Cestius contra Ciceronis actionem habitam pro eodem, cum alteram partem satis nosse non posset ex solâ defensione ” — *Instit. Orator.* l. x. c. v. in fin.

‡ “ Neque enim oratorius iste, imo hercle ne virilis quidem cultus est, quo plerique temporum nostrorum actores ita utuntur, ut lascivia verborum et levitate sententiarum et licentia compositionis histrionales modos expriment; quodque vix auditu fas esse debeat, laudis et gloriæ et ingenii loco plerique jactant, cantari saltarique commentarios suos. Unde oritur fœda illa et præpostera, sed tamen frequens quibusdam exclamatio, ut oratores nostri tenere dicere, histriones diserte saltare dicantur.” — *Dialog. de Orator.* c. xxvi.

§ “ . . . Suasoriæ materiæ pueris . . . controversiæ robustioribus assignantur. Sic fit, ut tyrannidarum præmia, aut vitiatarum electiones (marriages of the seduced by the seducers), aut pestilentiæ remedia, aut incesta matrum, aut quidquid in schola quotidie agitur, in foro vel raro vel nunquam, ingentibus verbis persequantur.” — *Dialog. de Orator.* c. xxxv. in fin.

ment of profit and of honour ; science and knowledge in their eyes are quite secondary matters ; they only want their ears tickled with sonorous declamation ; instruction for themselves or their sons is the last thing they care about. The students, on their part, misled by early indulged presumption and arrogance, impose as it were the law of a false taste upon their teachers ; and the latter, grasping at money and at momentary applauses, surrender depth and soundness at the call of profit or vanity. Might not this contemporary description of the times we are treating of equally suit the state of things which is daily observable around us ? As the matter is of high import, we will hear the statements of two witnesses of wholly different characters, and who lived in different times. Petronius shall speak first, as he traces these evils step by step in the answer to the above-mentioned observations of Encolpius ; and no one will question his knowledge of mankind and of his own times. He begins the above-mentioned answer by congratulating the youth who had spoken on being exempt from the infection of the taste prevailing in these times, and showing a very unfashionable soundness of understanding.* “ And therefore,” he says, “ you deserve that I should open to you the internal sources and ramifications of this matter. The teachers are not to blame for the setting of these absurd exercises ; *they* are compelled to follow fools in their folly. Did they not deliver prelections such as the young folks liked to hear, they might remain, as Cicero says, alone in their schools. Even as the parasites who are asked to table by great people can have no other thought than how to recommend themselves to their entertainers, and can have no other way of doing this than by tickling their ears as adroitly as possible ; even so, in our days, the teacher of rhetoric may sit like a fisher on his rock, without hope of a bite, if he

* “ Quoniam sermonem habes non publici saporis, et, quod rarissimum est, amas bonam mentem, non fraudabo te arte secreta.”

does not fasten a bait to his hook attractive to his intended victims. After all, then, where lies the evil? The PARENTS merit the whole blame; they do not wish their children to receive instruction according to the true though severe method. If they would allow time for the studies of their children to be prosecuted in regular succession; for the minds of the students to be formed, and the lessons of wisdom impressed upon them by the careful and thorough perusal of great writers; for their powers of composition to be matured and improved in proportion as they learned to select good models for imitation; in short, if they knew any better than their children how to estimate the true value of the tinsel which imposes on a childish taste, these empty declamations must assuredly gain more solidity. Now-a-days our orators trifle like striplings in the schools; like striplings excite laughter in the forum; and what is worse, in their old age they cannot be brought to acknowledge, that the perverse training given them in youth was as perverse as it is.

These strictures of a very competent judge are confirmed in every point by Quintilian, the contemporary of Domitian and of Trajan. He speaks first of Cestius and his compeers, and of the false taste introduced by them in oratory; relates how Seneca took up arms against the inflation and extravagance displayed by rhetoricians of that school, and introduced a new description of eloquence, diametrically opposed to that of Cestius. He censures the studied brevity, and enigmatical obscurities, and love of point and antithesis in Seneca, but immediately adds, that he has not ventured to wage war to extremity with the false and corrupt taste of the times, and that Seneca being in every one's hands, he could not snatch him at once from students, and has therefore laboured to substitute better models by degrees in his stead.*

* "Quod accidit mihi dum corruptum et omnibus vitiis fractum genus dicendi ad severiora revocare judicia contendo. Tum autem solus hic fere in manibus adolescentium fuit. Quem non equidem conabar excutere omnino, sed potioribus præferri non sinebam."

LUCAN preserves the character of a better era in taste and feeling. He belonged to the number of Nero's early friends and companions; but the Stoic philosophy, which Vespasian discouraged for its republican tendency, taught him fortitude, and superiority to external glitter and vicious enjoyments. The *Pharsalia*, the only work of Lucan which has come down to us, is of greater value as history than as poetry; for he has there depicted, with at least as much of historical truth as poetic vividness, the scenes of civil warfare, and the characters of the distinguished leaders. The structure, the rhetorical graces, and music of his versification, are not, as in later writers, mere mechanical imitations of Virgil; his merits, like his faults, are his own. It is in the nature of historical poems, which, in truth, are but attempts to unite contradictions, that only particular passages and episodes in them can be poetical. But the Roman spirit, the noble contempt of all grovelling motives, the elevated sentiments which Lucan expressed in degraded times, impart a higher character to his poem than perhaps could have been given it by a greater force of imagination; and have stamped it, as we have said above, with historical importance, as most of the contemporary and native writers of those times have perished. Silius Italicus, who chose as a theme for heroic poetry the history of the second Punic war, and Valerius Flaccus, who made a better selection for an epic in the fabulous expedition of the Argonauts, are neither of them equal in renown to STATIUS, who has been designated justly by Dante as one who aimed not only at a happy imitation of Virgil, but at excelling him in certain characteristic beauties, and by approaching and appropriating Christian ideas. The five books of miscellaneous poetry, entitled *Sylvæ*, have, in later times, always been considered the best and most original part of his works; though, in his own day, the *Achilleis*, in which he seeks to emulate Virgil, and the twelve books of the *Thebais*, in which Euripides

haunts him throughout, were higher rated by the prevailing canons of artificial criticism.

Before making more particular mention of Seneca, as the founder and the model of the new school of rhetoric, who sought to substitute studied conciseness, dialectic subtleties, and periods built up of studied antitheses, for swelling phrase and high-sounding but empty declamation, we must briefly note the relation held by two other historians to the intellectual state of the times from Tiberius to Trajan. Velleius Paterculus naturally claims the first notice, as a pupil of the Augustan age, and court-historian under Tiberius. The purpose which is apparent in all his writings, and the artful combination of republicanism with creeping servility, are characteristic of times when truth went for nothing, art for every thing. He wrote to supply a demand, renewed in our own days in certain quarters, to present in a condensed, sententious, and highly polished style, a superficial survey of Roman history, so contrived as to throw an air of expediency, and even of necessity, on all the despotic measures of the existing government. To captivate the favour of the sombre tyrant, is in reality the aim of the aspiring historian; but in this aim he could only succeed, by succeeding at the same time in pleasing (not offending at least) a certain part of the Roman public. The history of Velleius, therefore, naturally divides itself into two unequal parts, the one containing the pompous *Oraison Funèbre* of the past; the other, the courtly chronicle of the present. To execute a task like this required the easy mastery of style of the times of Horace and Asinius Pollio, as well as the brazen front of those of Sejanus. The narrative of the death of Cæsar furnishes the connecting link between the two sections of the work,—the first, which favours republics, and the second, which flatters despotism. Cæsar is blamed for not having maintained, by force of arms, the dominion which he reached by violence; by consequence, Tiberius is justified in defending his supreme power by

prætorian guards. It is curious to be made acquainted how they viewed those matters at court, which a statesman and stoic philosopher, like Tacitus, regarded under so different an aspect. The second work above referred to, which was written during the reign of Trajan, and adapted to the transitory enthusiasm for ancient Rome then re-awakened, is Florus's outline of history (*Epitome Rerum Romanarum*). This work, of which the intention was to give a bird's-eye view of the achievements of the Romans in the spirit which was just then popular, deserves no better the title of purely historical than the one first mentioned, being written with an equally determinate (though different) aim as the history of Velleius Paterculus. It is evidently written for a public, whose intellectual habits resembled those which have encouraged historical abridgements in France. Ancient or modern, this manner of writing may be termed an attempt to cut up history into epigrams suited to readers of slender appetite. Florus expressly confined himself to the period which afforded the most eligible material for his fashionable tissue, and abstains, with caution and good heed, from overstepping the times of Augustus. His brevity, which often runs into absolute obscurity, alternates here and there with a pomp of words perfectly ludicrous. As, however, he only treats of things in the mass, and shuns particulars, or at most lumps them together in the manner of a summary, he has ample scope for exciting our astonishment by his gigantic groupings, or blinding our judgment with the flash of his sharp decisive sentences.

SENECA, though himself trained as a rhetorician, and skilled in all the arts of the schools, none of which he disdained the use of, nevertheless, as we learn from Quintilian, combated the prevailing taste with eminent success. His example, however, like that of so many others, shows that a people which once has lost all relish for truth and simplicity, never can again recover a just medium in taste, but is thenceforth doomed per-

petually to oscillate betwixt extremes. Besides, how could a pure taste be expected of a man like Seneca, who, with all his merits, assumed at once the opposite parts of Stoic and courtier — a man who displayed the highest talent linked with deplorable littlenesses, and dishonoured his own virtues by compliance with the vices of others. If the tragedies which are commonly ascribed to Seneca were written by the M. Annæus Seneca of whom we are now speaking, it must be owned, that the same man, who waged such vehement war with inflation in prose, has left us an extraordinary sample of bombast in poetry. The chorusses of these pieces are not devoid of beauty, and the dialogue contains many fine passages and exalted thoughts; but the bulk is made up of tumid and unnatural declamation, affected phrase, and everlasting antithesis. The poet's heroes speak like absurd braggarts*, and his gods are the mere creatures of his own imagination, not beings of poetical tradition endued with distinct characters, to which the poet owes faithful observance. However, the effect (indeed, the authorship) of Seneca's poetry cannot be so well traced as the influence of his prose writings. Here he stood forth the Cicero of his times, and exercised on style and taste an influence no less than that of Cicero himself. That the one was a rhetorician, while the other had been an orator; and that Cicero had figured as a statesman through his talents and virtues, while Seneca climbed to eminence

* One example may be cited from amongst numberless others. In the "Hercules (Etæus)" (v. 1376.), the hero thus expresses himself:—

" Si me catenis horridus vinctum suis
 Præberet avidæ Caucasus volueri dapem,
 Scythia gemente, flebilis gemitus mihi
 Non excidisset. Si vagæ Symplegades
 Utraque premerent rupe, redeuntis minas
 Ferrem ruinæ. Pindus incumbat mihi,
 Atque Hæmus, et qui Thracios fluctus Athos
 Frangit, Jovisque fulmen excipiens Mimas.
 Non, ipse si in me, mater, hic mundus ruat;
 Superque nostros flagret incensus rogos
 Phæbeus axis, degener mentem Herculis
 Clamor donaret. Mille decurrant feræ,
 Pariterque lacerent; hinc feris clangoribus
 Ætherea me Stymphalis, hinc taurus minax," &c. &c.

as a courtier by adroitness and suppleness, mainly resulted from the difference of the men and times which they had to deal with. Seneca knew the world and mankind. His style, in which he was a master, was admirably suited to the philosophy which he taught; both were equally out of nature, but so was the whole spirit of his times, especially in the class of men to whom he addressed his writings.

The style chosen by Seneca is admirably suited to the Stoic dialectics and philosophy. The striking contrast of that system with the ordinary deportment of men, with Seneca's own conduct in life, and with all the fashionable pursuits of the classes for which his writings were intended, the graces of style, studied obscurities, and epigrammatic turns, like similar qualities in some of the French writers of the eighteenth century, kept the lazy reader in a passive yet pleasing state of excitement. The times were exactly fit to receive Seneca's instructions, as appears from the consideration acquired by the Stoic philosophy—as farther appears from the rapid propagation of Christianity, which in its doctrines and effects much coincided with the Stoic system. Under Hadrian, Epictetus obtained the all but entire predominance of the system for which Seneca had pioneered the way: under Marcus Aurelius, that system governed the empire. The only option left by the times to men of vigorous faculties, was, either to learn the lessons of resistance and endurance, or to snatch at all the means of enjoyment, and drown thought in wild dissipation.

TACITUS, who admired Seneca's eloquence and espoused his philosophy, whose sublime delineation of the last scenes of his life saved the honour of his master, and secured his immortality as the martyr of philosophy and virtue, shows in its best light the effect really produced by Seneca on the more exalted minds of his age. A noble spirit, instinct with the feeling of human virtue and dignity, full of admiration of older and better times, could not hope, surrounded by base-

ness, and overshadowed by absolute power, to instruct the many. He stood, like Thucydides, too much above his age to be a popular writer; he only sought to instruct and strengthen the few minds which could comprehend him; and for this purpose Seneca's philosophy, and the style which he had formed on Seneca's model, served him admirably. He narrated the course of events from the death of Augustus to that of Nero under the title of annals, of which there are lost the books between the seventh and tenth inclusive. The transactions of the period from Galba to Domitian, he wrote under the title of History. Of this history four books only are extant, with part of the fifth.

A large part of the transactions treated of by Tacitus had come within his own eye-sight and knowledge; research, therefore, was less required than acuteness to seize, and skill to communicate, the characteristic features of his times. His task required a vigorous philosophy, in opposition to the loose sentimental sophistries of the times — a firm and dignified character standing out from the common baseness and slavishness. Tacitus was not born and bred, like his friend the younger Pliny, for a courtier of the better sort; nor would he practise forensic eloquence. Standing alone, his whole being became concentrated inwardly; and his writings, even against his will, betrayed the bitter feelings of a spirit forced to brood on itself, and sick of the universal corruption. Tacitus saw around him nothing but perfidy and profligacy, and was naturally led to derive all variations in human affairs from a premeditated plan, or the peculiar character of the actors. Yet he never forgets to signalise his generous disgust at the change of the whole course of administration into private transactions. The picture he has drawn of the last incidents of Seneca's life sufficiently shows what description of practical philosophy he alone deems worthy of elevated minds in these deplorable times.

Next to Tacitus in elevation and dignity, we place the poet PERSIUS, whose satires apparently flowed from

a very different impulse, and deserve a very different place, from Juvenal's. Persius stands, like Tacitus, above his age, and sees plainly to what point its moral state is tending. He takes no pleasure, like Juvenal, in the delineation of vices ; does not jest, like Petronius, now on the failings of men, now on their virtues ; but makes use of the scourge of satire, as Tacitus of that of history, to warn the few who read and understand him, and to steel them against the evils of the times by an energetic philosophy.* He aims to unveil the sources of corruption, to administer warnings, suggest means for stemming farther corruption ; not, like Juvenal, to drag vices and deeds of shame to light, merely to give aliment to malignity. He does not, therefore, like Juvenal, and after him, Boileau, devote whole satires separately to particular vices, or prevalent modes or caprices ; but all the perversions of a perverted time pass in review before him. He understands better than Juvenal how to select his subject, and point his censure at matters neither above nor below philosophical animadversion. The satire of Persius strikes objects inherent in human nature ; vices which, in the most different times, amongst nations the most different, never fail to reappear again and again. As Tacitus displays the Stoic philosophy in all its nobleness in the life, and, even more, in the death and sufferings of exalted persons, so Persius also teaches that the consciousness of a virtuous and upright life affords higher beatitude than all the arts and luxuries of corrupted revellers, and that the consciousness of self-degradation is the most severe torture of a generation such as his own.

Before passing to other writers in whom the accomplishments of the times appear on their more favourable side, we must touch upon a class to be found everywhere, in the neighbourhood of a court, or in the haunts

* Persius depicts his own character in his fifth satire : —

“ Verba togæ sequeris, junctura callidus acri,
Ore teres modico, pallentes radere mores
Doctus, et ingenuo culpam desigere ludo.”

of an immense capital, which bring together a multitude of idlers. We allude to the style of bitter satire, scurrilous and malignant mockery, low wit, levity, and impudence; with their usual concomitants, rage for anecdote, transformation of history into tittle-tattle, and the habit of tracing all that happens, or has ever happened, to the personal relations of the parties concerned.

All the bitterness of satire, and all the malignity of ridicule, are exemplified in Juvenal, Petronius, and Martial; and it was evinced by all three in their lives, and by two of them even in their writings, that their bitter animadversions on others were far from incompatible with venal adulation and sneaking servility to the worst of those of whom they had given the worst representation. Juvenal does not merely, like Horace, draw to light the ludicrous side of human perverseness and folly, or show himself, like Persius, deeply grieved by a prevailing corruption, which he indicates merely without downright description, but rather lingers with visible complacency on scenes which even Tiberius concealed in Capreæ. He inveighs against monsters of crime, cruelty, and wantonness, in verses which exhibit an artificial polish and smoothness which Horace appears purposely to avoid. Juvenal waxes ornate and rhetorical in places where, if his aim had really been to amend mankind, rhetorical ornament would have been among the last things attended to.

This is even more the case in the writings of Petronius Arbiter. Petronius, in the fragment of his book of satires still extant, shows, better than any historical description, the height of mental training, the refinement of tone and style, the exhaustless wit, the union of all art and science with all lusts and vices, which in Nero's time prevailed in the upper classes of society. Similar features have appeared amongst different nations at different times: in the bloom of Italian art and poetry, we only need mention Peter Aretin; in the brilliant French literary period, the Pucelle, and some of

the works of Diderot, Bachaumont, and La Chapelle. Persius saw, with the feelings of an honest man, the consequences of all the vicious levities of his times, and vehemently gives vent to his long-smothered disgust at a pitiful race. Petronius, a principal partner in Nero's scandalous revels, or at all events an actor of that part to the life, takes every thing on the ludicrous side. He only laughs at the comic scenes and situations occasioned by the indulgence of passions: comic effect is the main point with him, as earnest instruction with Persius. Petronius is a perfect master of manner, wit, and raillery, and makes use of the Latin tongue with marvellous adroitness; as Voltaire, in similar works, does of the French. The transition from prose to verse is easy in delineating the courtier's life, whose every aim and expression is directed to nothing but dissipation and self-indulgence; and episodes of seriousness are introduced with no other end than to avoid fatiguing the reader by monotony, and surprise him agreeably by the *piquant* contrast of philosophic gravity with the wildest merriment.

Martial does not rank with the satirists; but his epigrammatic poems express, as fully as those of Juvenal and Petronius, the miserable character of times in which poetry regularly went a-begging. Like the latter, Martial is ornate, witty, versatile; now flattering Domitian in the most despicable manner; now extolling virtue and magnanimity, and scouting the people whom he had just before been extolling to the highest pitch with mendicant adulation. Among many other persons praised by Martial may be named Regulus, whom we know, from Pliny's letters, in the character of one of the most malignant informers, in the deplorable times of the persecution of all men of high character, and moreover, as a very middling orator. And yet the same man is not ashamed to celebrate also Nerva and Trajan, and supplicate them for presents. The foulest things are hitched into short couplets, and in this shape are easier retained; the most loathsome

vices and shameful wants are uttered without reserve ; and the poet expressly declares, that he cares little for being read from one end of the Roman world to the other, if no gold flowed into his purse for it.*

The rage for anecdote, and the transformation of history into a mere collection of notices of the private life of one or another person of importance, stands in the closest manner connected with the above-mentioned description of writings ; for it arises out of the same prevailing corruption, the same lust for prying into every thing bad that took place anywhere, and the strong impulse to give a full career to every species of malice and evil-speaking. In Rome, as under the regent and Louis XV. in France, and especially in Paris, a school of writers had formed itself, which sought profit and pleasure in the quest and chase, perhaps in the invention, of revolting details and scenes of private scandal. Whole collections were formed of stories and anecdotes of that kind, many of which we find preserved in Suetonius, and especially in the lives of the later emperors.

In the times of these emperors public journals of news were in circulation, which were read with extreme eagerness in the provinces and the armies, and which, innocent as they might be, proved occasionally dangerous to their readers, and the personages mentioned in them ; as we see from the speeches put into the mouths of the informers, in Tacitus. If even in Cicero's time budgets of city news were collected, anecdotes of all kinds, marriages, deaths, law-suits, and town-talk, at high price for transmission, to friends in the provinces — as we learn from the circumstance that Cicero took it extremely ill of his friend that he sends him purchased novelties which he never had any wish to know — it may easily be conceived that in

* “ Sed meus in Geticis ad Martia signa pruinis

A rigido teritur centurione liber.

Dicitur et nostros cantare Britannia versus.

Quid prodest ? nescit sacculus ista meus.”

Epigr. 1.

subsequent times, when freedom of speech grew dangerous, when less and less of anything like public life came to exist, stolen intelligence of the prince, his favourites, his court, his amusements, and daily occupations, became more and more objects of curiosity. Even in the city, as we learn from writers of later times, news of the emperor's travelling plans and routes were bought with solid coin from the courtiers. The Greeks in the palace took a leading share in this traffic, and spread, by written news-letters, those scandalous stories respecting the private lives of their rulers, such as a certain class of writers circulate in our modern capitals. That shoals of secret histories of this sort were in circulation we learn from Lampridius, Vopiscus, and similar authors, who, in speaking of their original sources, commonly cite three kinds of them. First, they mention the commentaries of the senate or the emperor, communicated to them from the public libraries, especially the Ulpian; secondly, the journals of public transactions in Rome (*acta publica populi*); and thirdly, the Greek memoirs of the private lives of the emperors. This last description of writings they designate with extreme distinctness, so that we cannot doubt that a mass of collections of anecdotes were extant; and that an altogether peculiar sort of biography had formed itself, holding a middle station between memoirs and regular biography; and drawing from all sources all sorts of particulars, to gratify the taste of the times for the secret and the scandalous. In this description may be included Suetonius's lives of the emperors; for in these the purely personal appears already predominant; public and private matters stand side by side; the former, indeed, subordinate to the latter. Instead of forming a whole from varied materials, articles of news, historical incidents, and individual traits are merely strung one after the other.

We willingly turn to the fairer aspects of literature in these times, in which learning and the exact sciences, jurisprudence, agriculture, domestic economy, natural

philosophy, rhetoric ; in brief, an encyclopædic range of acquirement, were pursued with greater zeal than ever. The style and manner of Columella introduced into the schools, and exalted to the rank of a classic, a work in which the subjects of husbandry, household economy, and finance, are handled with rhetorical elegance. It may here be observed, that jurisprudence and husbandry were the only sciences which can really be termed indigenous and peculiar to the Italians. It was not until the period we are treating of, that both these sciences attained their full and complete development.

Amongst the writers of these times whose efforts acquired for husbandry a place in the scholastic circle of science, in connection with natural and political economy, we should have named the elder Pliny, were it not that he more properly belongs to another class, in which he takes the first place. For a public which felt the same want which has since been felt in modern times, first in France, and afterwards in other countries of Europe, in the eighteenth century, he singly undertook a work which, in our times, is shared amongst societies of literary persons ; if he has failed, therefore, to realise much that might have been expected of him, the magnitude of his undertaking may well plead his excuse. His aim was to comprise in a single work all the branches of knowledge, the aggregate of which it was requisite for any one to acquire, who wished to possess the sum of the accomplishments of his times. He called this work an history of nature ; we should rather give it the name of an encyclopædia. It was a truly gigantic labour to form, from 2500 authors, a compilation adapted to the tastes of general readers, designed to save the learned the trouble of references, and to bring into intimate union, by aid of rhetoric and philosophy, things which were widely separate in their nature. It has often, indeed, happened to him, as to all compilers, to introduce amidst passages of the best and the most trustworthy writers, others of the

worst and most apocryphal ; not, however, in the department of botany ; for there he exclusively follows Dioscorides, as the later writers Galen, Oribasius, and Serapion. To pass judgment on the details of so extensive a work, would require an insight into every branch of science there treated of. Buffon may be deemed to have been the best judge of its merits ; and according to Buffon, it contains an infinity of knowledge of every department of human occupation and action, conveyed in a dress of brilliant and ornate description.

The immediate effect of Pliny's work on his contemporaries, and on the times immediately subsequent, we have not, indeed, data to exhibit ; but its effect on human improvement in the middle ages is clearly traceable ; for it contained the substance of many hundred works, lost, or in part wholly inaccessible to the middle ages, and is written in a style precisely suited to attract to its study the learned men of an age fond of affected studied sharpness of manner. Accordingly Pliny, and still more his abbreviator Solinus, are the sole source and authority of Vincent de Beauvais and others, who attempted in the middle ages to produce similar encyclopædias. These models they follow almost exclusively ; and even the Italians, when they based the modern sciences on the ancient, started from Pliny, who still remains an authority on art and its history.

The name of the younger Pliny would be distinguished in the intellectual history of his times, for this, if for no other reason, that, enjoying the first dignities in the state, and the full confidence of his sovereign, he devoted the whole of his influence, and no small part of his property, to the encouragement and extension of general mental cultivation. His correspondence is a monument no less characteristic of the tone of the leading families of the empire, than Cicero's epistles of the last years of the republic. In both we find the cultivated and leading class of the nation expressing themselves familiarly on state affairs and private occurrences ; we gain, as it were, views into their inmost

relations. As no convenient journals then existed, in which our governments now communicate all they wish to make known, it is certain that many of Cicero's epistles, and those of his friends, as well as many of those of Pliny (for instance, the description of his Laurentian villa, the narrative of the death of his uncle, &c.) were intended for circulation, nay, for sale, by some speculative bookseller.

The comparison of Cicero's with Pliny's correspondence enables us to contrast the tone of aristocratical and monarchical times, when each had attained the point of highest perfection. The style of the writer, in that collection which bears Cicero's name, has more of vigour, solidity, and scientific tincture than Pliny's; which, on the other hand, has more of art, finesse, and elaboration. In the former, the tone, with all reciprocation of senatorial courtesies, is nevertheless open, straightforward, and free from courtly regards and disguises. In Pliny, on the other hand, the rank of the writer and correspondent may easily be traced through every turn of expression. Trajan, to whom a whole book of these letters is directed, is not, indeed, loaded with forms and titles of servility, as in later times, when even the first men in the nation had lost all feeling of personal dignity; but he receives far higher honour from the tone of consideration, and the pervading expression of the sense of distance betwixt him and the consular writing to him. Cicero, with all his art, awards nature her rights; in Pliny, manner is all in all, and even simplicity is artful; that circumspection, so indispensable where every one has a fixed position, where every thing flows from one man, is visible throughout.

It may be gathered incidentally from Pliny's letters, though it could not readily be made out from the history of the period, that in Pliny's, as in Cicero's times, there were to be found in the leading orders many men of the most admirable qualities, who kept free from the general corruption, and counteracted, in the most

vigorous manner, the downward tendencies of their times, personified in the crowd of vile informers and rapacious pettifoggers; who promoted, with distinguished self-devotion, schools, and scientific and learned undertakings in general, and did not think it unbecoming the dignity of their lofty station to instruct their fellow-citizens by their literary example and efforts.

Pliny's epistles approach the modern manner far more nearly than Cicero's, especially his correspondence with Trajan. His official letters, and Trajan's answers, in brevity and neatness of style, are a model of good official correspondence. In his private letters there is no mistaking something of premeditation, of effort at ingenious turns of phrase and delicate compliments. The style resembles that of polite conversation; in which every one does not so much aim at expressing his own thoughts and feelings, as at showing himself on the side most advantageous to his own pretensions. The same solicitude for the credit of having turned an ingenious phrase, of having selected a happy mode of expression, shows itself in the only one of Pliny's many discourses extant — the panegyric on the emperor Trajan. That panegyric is to us very valuable, as containing many traits of Trajan's life, of which we should be otherwise ignorant; but, as addressed to his contemporaries, the panegyric of a prince, promulgated during his lifetime, is assuredly not calculated to elevate and invigorate the souls of the subjects of an empire.

BOOK VI.

THE EMPIRE OF THE ANTONINES DOWNWARDS.

CHAP. I.

THE ANTONINES.

UNDER the reign of Hadrian's successors, the time seemed to have arrived when philosophy and science, according to Plato's wish, should rule the world. Unfortunately, no complete history of the life or of the government of the first Antoninus has descended to our time. All that we know is put together from general, hasty, mutilated, fragmentary notices; and these notices chiefly concern his private life, and his measures of police and internal administration. Of military matters we learn little. Insurrections in Britain, Mauritania, and Judea were quelled by his legates; and a new wall was erected in Scotland against the inroads of the Highland Scots: a war with the Germans and Dacians was speedily brought to a termination; revolts of the Greeks and Egyptians were suppressed without useless barbarities. The petty princes, besides, on the Euphrates and Caucasus, spontaneously offered him marks of submission or dependence; the Parthians durst not provoke him; and in southern Russia he was recognised in the character of an arbiter and protector. The franchises of such towns as still retained their independence were respected by so well-disposed a prince as Antoninus. He aided, also, those free towns from his treasury with less ostentation than Hadrian; partly, indeed, from his large private property. He not only assisted the public works with contributions, but also supported

the leading public functionaries and senators of the free towns by grants, which might enable them to administer their functions advantageously to their fellow-citizens. He devoted the same sedulous attention to the civil law which Hadrian had given it, and allowed those judges who had given proof of capacity and integrity to retain their judicial seats for life, in opposition to the former usages. The city prefect, and the prefect of the imperial guard, had then a supreme judicial jurisdiction: the first he left twenty years in office, and nominated a successor to the second, when he expressly desired it. The new judicial regulations made by Antoninus were framed, under his inspection, by Vindius Verus, Salvius Valens, Volusius Metianus, Ulpius Marcellus, and Diabolenus; whose advice he asked as jurisconsults. Of the two men whom Antoninus, on Hadrian's recommendation, had found it necessary to adopt as his heirs and successors, the one, Annius Verus, afterwards known as Marcus Aurelius, and finally as Antoninus the Wise, trod faithfully in his own steps; the other, L. Verus, preferred the pleasures of life to the arduous duties of the government, which he willingly left to his active colleague and brother by adoption, Marcus. Antoninus Pius seems to have very early perceived that L. Verus would be unfit for a ruler, but had too great a respect for Hadrian's will to think of entirely removing him; and fortunately, L. Verus was so much younger than Marcus Aurelius, that he naturally and necessarily yielded him precedence in all things. The latter afterwards took him as colleague, and they lived in brotherly union, as the former cared less about power and dominion than about his private pleasures; and Marcus Aurelius, on the other hand, endured with stoic composure the errors of his wife, the daughter of the first Antoninus, as well as those of his colleague. While under the reigns of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, the empire enjoyed the advantages of a mild monarchical government, administered by republican laws, which, as well as the judicial forms, were gradually

adapted to the imperial constitution, and the altered state of social relations ; while love of the arts and sciences were diffused through all the towns, and, confiding in the government, men devoted themselves to the occupations congenial with tranquillity and leisure ; the storm clouds were gathering in the distance, which from the commencement of Marcus Aurelius's government almost uninterruptedly devastated the empire. The true origin of the mighty national movements, which from this time forwards chiefly appear on the Danube, cannot be traced with certainty. The previous wars of the Romans with the nations of German and Sarmatian origin on the Danube and the Rhine, have been already adverted to. Tranquillity had followed the suppression of the revolt of Civilis. The Dacians first showed themselves in force under Domitian ; and, with other bordering tribes, ravaged from time to time the Roman domain. Sarmatian tribes also made their appearance, with those of German origin, on the lower Danube ; and amongst these, the Jazyges are principally named. Under Domitian, the Marcomanni, who were first heard of in the wars of Cæsar, and appear to have belonged to the Suevian league, and to have bordered upon Helvetia, are again named as a formidable league. During the wars with the Dacians, they were freed from the burthensome obligation of reinforcing the Romans with their armies. Trajan, Hadrian, and Antoninus took such excellent measures for the protection of the frontiers, that Hadrian's personal presence was only once required against the Sarmatian Roxolani : all other inroads were repulsed by his lieutenants. Under Marcus Aurelius, Suevian bands fell upon Rhætia, and afterwards the Chatti occupied part of the left bank of the Rhine. The Chatti were driven back by Aufidius Victorinus across the Rhine : the Chauci, who threatened Belgium, were successfully met by Didius Julian. It was after the close of these wars that war commenced with the Marcomanni, who were leagued with other tribes, partly of German, partly Sarmatian origin ; and took the opportunity of many of the

legions being withdrawn from the line of the Danube into the East (to be used in wars with the Parthians), to commit tremendous ravages in the Roman provinces.

The Parthians during four years engrossed the attention of both emperors. At the same time that the provinces of Rome were invaded by the Suevi, Chatti, and Chauci, the Parthians fell upon and routed two Roman armies, took possession of Armenia and the passes of the Taurus, and ravaged Syria and Cappadocia. The best legions, the most distinguished generals, were therefore despatched to the East; and it was thought expedient that one of the emperors should take the immediate conduct of the war. Lucius Verus undertook it, at the desire of Marcus Aurelius. Probably his colleague hoped that distance from Rome, and from the associates of his pleasures, would reclaim the young man from the effeminacy and luxury to which he had resigned himself; while the prospect of glory and easy victory would stimulate his activity. What happened, however, was precisely the reverse. Lucius Verus turned over to his lieutenant the glories and the toils of the war; and during the four years which he remained in the East, it was by much persuasion only he could be brought to show himself twice to the army. The rest of the time he spent in three places, which, since the time of the Seleucidian kings, were second in repute to Alexandria only, and superior to Rome, in the arts of pleasure and luxury, in the most incredible inventions to gratify the senses, and to rekindle the dying embers of sensuality. These places were Daphne, then proverbial, as Capua had been, for luxury; amidst whose woods and grottoes, brooks and fountains, L. Verus spent the summer; Laodicea, where he resorted in winter; and Antioch, which from time to time he visited for the sake of public feasts and spectacles. In the latter place his extravagancies were ridiculed on the stage.

Of the Parthian war we know little; and even did we know more, the narrative of every incident and action would probably not be eminently attractive.

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166. After its termination a triumph was solemnised, on the return of L. Verus.

Unfortunately, we also know very little of the history of Marcus Aurelius ; and what little we know it is not easy to place in chronological order. There is nothing left for us, therefore, but to give a general account, without attending to the order of time. War, pestilence, and revolt ravaged the provinces under his reign ; the vices of his colleague and of his wife : nevertheless Marcus during his whole life remained true to the principles of his sect. Before the Parthian war, the reverence felt for him, even by Lucius Verus, had kept him and his minions within some bounds ; but after his return, as his biographers expressed it, he lived like a Caius, Tiberius, and Nero. He kept open house for all the revellers in Rome, and gave banquets, distinguished at least in one point, that one of them cost above 40,000*l.* sterling. Marcus sighed when he learned these excesses ; sometimes lamented the destiny of the state, but avoided every semblance of dispute or rupture. By his patience with the riot and extravagance of his colleague, he succeeded, indeed, in maintaining undisputed ascendancy in the empire, but durst not leave Verus in the capital, when the war with the nations on the Danube required his own presence. Both emperors afterwards travelled together to Aquileia. It seemed requisite for them to join the legions on the other side of the Alps ; but it was long before Verus could be induced to undertake the journey ; and when at length he joined the army, nothing could prevail with him to remain there ; the debaucheries of the capital attracted him too irresistibly thitherwards. Fortunately, he died on the home journey ; and Antoninus was freed at least from this source of uneasiness.

Another was his wife Faustina, the daughter of the first Antoninus, as dissimilar to her husband as his colleague had been. She often interfered in public affairs ; and in spite of her scandalous course of life retained great influence over her husband, who was

accused, not without reason, of immersing himself in contemplations, while every thing went wrong around him. The education of the successor to the throne was wholly left to the empress: the misfortunes of the times and the study of philosophy left the emperor but little spare time for such an object; and his own nature and mode of life, from twelve years upwards, had been so grave and severe, that he knew too little the consequences of indulgence and of false tenderness.

The inroads of the barbarians on the provinces south of the Danube, their incursions to the borders of Italy, the plunder and desolation of whole districts, occasioned and recommended the transplantation of whole tribes of barbarians to Roman ground. This was partly the consequence of the ravages of a pestilence which L. Verus had brought with him from the East. The Parthian war had already thinned the ranks of the legions which defended Pannonia, Noricum, Dacia, and Mœsia. The pestilence next weakened them so greatly, that all the lands betwixt the Danube and Aquileia were ravaged; that predatory tribes found their way from the Rhine, even into Italy; and hundreds and thousands of people were kidnapped and carried off from the provinces. The prefect of the imperial guard had perished, with his army; there was no resource but to gain over the several tribes singly. A separate treaty was first made with the Quadi, a German tribe, which had captured above 50,000 people. They obtained important advantages by this treaty; and engaged to restore all the Roman prisoners, but kept as many as they wanted to work for them or could sell to advantage. The Jazyges, a Sarmatian people, had carried off 100,000 persons, and still pursued their hostilities against the Romans, even after the peace which had been concluded with the Quadi; and the latter, notwithstanding that peace, did not scruple to aid them; as in like manner, contrary to the terms of the articles of the peace, they gave the Marcomanni free passage through their territory, when the former had been at length repulsed by the Romans.

Three times, and each time for several years, was Marcus Aurelius detained by war on the other side of the Alps. Twice he tried to procure peace by negotiations, and to gain over the barbarians by gentle means ; but he was soon forced to acknowledge that nothing was to be accomplished except by consistent thorough-going vigour. The resolution to exercise such vigour he carried into effect on the occasion of his third expedition to the Danube ; but, unfortunately for the empire, death surprised him before he had finished the war.

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to
169. In the first of the above-mentioned expeditions, during which Verus died, Marcus Aurelius had made grants of land to several tribes in Dacia and Mœsia, and even in Italy. Peace, however, did not endure long ; masses of barbarians were embodied into the Roman army ; a number of others settled in the Roman territory ; the attraction was too strong for the rest. In his second expedition, Marcus Aurelius was detained three years in Upper Pannonia, or the region of Sirmium, in order to direct on the spot the military operations. It was probably before he set out on this second expedition, that he put up to public sale all the splendours which were accumulated in the imperial palaces and treasuries ; all the superfluous embellishments, curiosities, and rarities, which Verus had collected together. The account given by Julius Capitolinus of this auction of imperial property, which lasted for two months, leads us to suspect that, under the pretext of a sale, the emperor was in fact only obtaining a voluntary loan from the richer classes, on the deposit of pledges. For it is said, that when his finances were restored to a better condition, he allowed the buyers the privilege of returning the articles purchased, and receiving back the purchase-money ; but did not take it ill of any one, who chose to retain what he had purchased. The main point was probably to rid himself, under a fair pretext, and without any extraordinary noise, of the quantity of valuables, household apparatus, and furniture, which L. Verus, like Nero, had amassed in the imperial

palace. It was probably on this occasion, and in order to facilitate the use of these commodities to the purchasers, that he allowed senatorial families (*claris viris*) to be waited upon by servants clothed like those of the imperial house, in white clothing trimmed with gold, and to be served from silver and gold dishes.

The second war with the nations on the Danube ended pretty much as the first. The emperor chastised the Quadi for their faithlessness; extirpated almost totally two petty tribes, whom he had previously given leave to settle on the Roman territory, but who had taken the first opportunity to league themselves with his enemies. The war on the Danube had not yet been brought to a close, when Avidius Cassius threw off his allegiance in Syria, and assumed the title of emperor. This leader had formerly marched with L. Verus into the East, and had the greatest share in the successes obtained over the Parthians. Afterwards he was again employed on the Danube, where, in like manner, he gained important advantages; finally, M. Aurelius despatched him back to the East, where he restored the declining discipline of the Syrian legions by merciless rigours. It is probable that, during a dangerous illness of the emperor, or on false intelligence of his death, he had advanced pretensions to the succession, and then found he had gone too far to retreat. Many affirmed, what is given out for indisputable truth in the portion of Dio Cassius's history which is extant, that he had been secretly incited by Faustina, and promised her hand in the event of the death of Marcus Aurelius. It has however been established by Vulcatius Gallicanus, by extracts from the correspondence between the emperor and his wife, that the latter viewed the revolt as far more dangerous, and was far more eager than her husband for the punishment of all concerned in it. The suppression of this insurrection did not even require the emperor's presence; he despatched troops for the purpose; one of his generals occupied Asia Minor. These preparations however proved un-

necessary, as Avidius Cassius was killed by two of his officers. The letters of that chief which are extant exhibit a harsh judgment of his times ; and contain not undeserved blame of the emperor's over-indulgent character ; but only increase our admiration of Marcus Aurelius, as a prince whom neither ingratitude nor revolt could ever excite to anger ; and who would not resort, even for the punishment of flagrant treason, to other means than regular trial, and the judgment of the senate.

It was not till after Cassius's death, and after having lost his own wife shortly before, that Marcus Aurelius himself proceeded to Syria. On this journey, which carried the emperor through Judea to Egypt, and from thence through Asia Minor to Athens, he gave encouragement and assistance everywhere to the learned class, without betraying anywhere vanity and arrogance like Hadrian's. From this period the appointments of the public teachers in Athens were settled at a fixed rate, and a head teacher appointed to every philosophical sect. In Athens, Marcus Aurelius did homage to the prejudices of his times, by submitting to the ceremony of initiation to the mysteries, the butt of Lucian and Apuleius. Meanwhile, war continued to rage on the Danube ; and though many successes had been obtained by his generals, the emperor considered it advisable to proceed to the scene of action in person ; the Quadi as well as the Marcomanni having violated the recent treaties. In conjunction with the Hermunduri and the Sarmatian tribes, they came in the following year to a decisive engagement with the emperor, in which victory remained on the side of the Romans ; without, however, effecting the subjection of these barbarian tribes. In the following year the emperor fell ill, and was taken
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180. off before the termination of the war.

CHAP. II.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF COMMODUS TO THE ACCESSION OF
CLAUDIUS.

THE same malignant malady which had carried off Marcus conspired with the assaults of the barbarians to bewilder the inexperience of his son and successor, Commodus, who was with difficulty persuaded to remain at the head of the army. At first he yielded implicitly to the guidance of his father's friends, who exerted their influence to prevent him leaving the army until he had closed an advantageous treaty of peace with the barbarians. The terms were in every respect in favour of Rome. He accorded his protection to the Sarmatian tribes of the Jazyges, Buri, and likewise to the Vandals, against the Quadi and the Marcomanni; and made it an express stipulation that the latter should not make war with the former without consent of the Romans. The Marcomanni and Quadi were compelled to promise not to approach their settlements within a league of the Danube, on the banks of which the Roman forts were situated. They were allowed to hold their popular assemblies only once a month, and that, too, in the presence of a Roman officer. On the other hand, the Romans razed their forts on the farther bank of the Danube, and withdrew their garrisons.

The terms of this treaty with the barbarians were observed for many years with fidelity, not to reckon the desultory irruptions of scattered bands, which were scarcely to be guarded against, considering the habits and internal organisation of these warlike tribes.

One article of the conditions of peace shows the sad situation of the empire, and prognosticates its hast-

ening ruin. It was stipulated by Commodus, that 13,000 Quadi, and a somewhat smaller number of Marcomanni, should enlist in his legions. In this way the barbarians acquired knowledge of the art of war, which they could afterwards communicate to their countrymen ; while the Roman armies, by holding out encouragement to these new recruits, fostered traitors and enemies in their own ranks. This policy became however still more ruinous, when, afterwards, a yearly contingent came to be required, instead of the number of soldiers at first specified, whereby the proportion of foreign recruits yearly increased in the Roman armies, the citizens of the empire finding it more and more convenient to transfer the burthen of frontier service to mercenary strangers, who viewed the weal of the empire with indifference.

The natural disposition of the new emperor appears to have been very rightly apprehended by Dio Cassius, who calls him a weak, but well-natured youth of nineteen. His character, easy, simple, and timid, was soon observed by the men who got round him, and lured him from the public affairs to dissolute amusements. In process of time, cowardice and custom made him vicious and merciless.

Two years after the accession of Commodus, a rupture took place with his family, as well as an occasion for distrust of the whole body of the senate, highly conducive to the ends of those who studiously set themselves to work him up to cruel and tyrannical measures. His own sister Lucilla had formed a conspiracy against him, in which her husband and son-in-law were implicated. The conspirator whose dagger was employed in the work missed his stroke ; but in aiming at the emperor's person, exclaimed, " The senate sends thee this." These words were enough to inflame a suspicious temper against the senate ; it appeared, indeed, that many of the senators had been privy to the plot : the young emperor was rescued solely by his guard ; and after

having sent his wife and sister into exile, and wreaked his rage on all the other members of his family, he continued to regard the senate with fixed distrust, and reposed his confidence solely in the creatures whose profit lay in his crimes.

As the unhappy prince now thought he could trust none but his guard, the commander of that guard resumed naturally the station he had held under Tiberius and Claudius ; and the history of the prefects of the imperial guard again became the history of the empire. At its head stood one after the other Tarrutenus, Paternus, Perennis, Niger, Cleander, and the fall of each of these leaders successively was equivalent to a revolution in government. The first of them appears to have been one of those men who were brought forward by Marcus Aurelius, and advanced to the highest public functions. Authors disagree about his character ; but it appears certain that Perennis, who succeeded him as prefect, attracted on his head the fatal suspicions of the timid tyrant, and thereby paved the way to his ruin. Perennis had already taken advantage of the conspiracy of Lucilla and Quadratus to ruin or remove from about him all the relations of Commodus. Having then succeeded in engrossing all power in his own hands, he sought to divert the emperor's mind with races, fights, and feats of archery, so that he and his friends should rule almost alone. As the unhappy Commodus sunk lower and lower, as he hunted down and cut off all the distinguished men of his father's times, it does not seem improbable that Perennis had conceived the project of ultimately dethroning his prince, to make room for his own family.

Perennis and his emperor pursued together their course of cruelties : extravagance in sports and in wild-beast-baitings was practised by Commodus alone, while the public administration was conducted not amiss by his favourite. The soldiery were however highly dissatisfied with him, as he did not think it

necessary to win their hearts by relaxing their discipline ; and the disaffection of these profligate bands, together with his misplaced confidence in Cleander, who supplanted him in the tyrant's favour, proved his ruin. The discontent of the army in Britain was made a handle of by Cleander to terrify the emperor into giving up Perennis and his whole family. That army, which had fought bravely against the active barbarians, who had made a formidable irruption into the Roman province, found some occasion of discontent with the administration of Perennis, and sent a deputation of not less than 1500 men to Rome. This detachment of picked troops was not only suffered to land in Gaul, but to march, without impediment, direct to Rome, where they clamorously charged Perennis with aiming to raise his family by the overthrow of that of the emperor. Commodus abandoned in terror his favourite to their threatening cries. Cleander, however, did not immediately reap the succession of all his powers, as, after the death of Perennis, two prefects were again appointed. None, however, to whom the prefecture was intrusted after Perennis, maintained their footing more than a short time ; and Cleander soon became far more powerful and formidable than Perennis had ever been.

A. D. 186. Cleander enjoyed but for three years the power he had thus seized for himself. In like manner as he had employed the soldiery against Perennis, the populace were employed against himself. In Rome, as in all despotic states, despotic cruelty and caprice reached only the higher and middle ranks, from whom there was little to fear ; while the populace and the soldiery made themselves dreaded by the government. The soldiers had overthrown Perennis ; the populace rose against Cleander, or were set in motion against him like a machine. Commodus, who from youth upwards had shown taste and talent for all good-for-nothing pursuits, and utter incapacity for every liberal art and science, distinguished himself as an archer and a gladiator, especially after taking regular instructions from

the Parthian and Moorish professors of that art. Whole herds of the rarest animals—ostriches, rhinoceroses, giraffes, lions—were collected together, that the emperor might slaughter them by hundreds at the first shot. While famine and pestilence desolated the land, the games and combats were still celebrated with even augmenting extravagance. Cleander put to death one distinguished person after another, and even sold the corn-trade to Papirius Dionysius. The dearth which ensued on this speculation drove the populace to despair; and an insurrection arose against the prefect, who had also given some offence to the infantry of the guards. At that time the emperor and the prefect were staying out of the city on account of the plague. The populace sallied forth, and stormed the dwelling of the prefect, who charged them with the cavalry of the guards, and drove the people back to the city. Here, however, the infantry joined the populace: a regular engagement took place, in which the cavalry had the worst; and the movement became so general, that the life of the emperor seemed in danger. Lucilla, the sister of Commodus, and Marcia, the most favoured of his concubines, and the protectress of the Christians, seized the opportunity of urgently entreating him to save himself by the sacrifice of the prefect. Accordingly Cleander was put to death, and thereby the uproar pacified.

From thenceforth the half-frantic emperor raged worse than the plague, which still continued its ravages. He no longer confided in any one; and no prefect could long maintain his footing in his office. The whole senate were in constant risk of their lives, and, to save them, were compelled to adore the emperor in the characters of Hercules and Mercury in the amphitheatre. His extravagant expense in public spectacles and profuse gratuities (he would sometimes distribute sums of about five pounds to every applicant), not only drained the emperor's private exchequer, but the public

treasury, so completely, that the resource of indiscriminate confiscation, even that of the enormous wealth of Cleander himself, no longer sufficed to fill up the deficit. All sorts of charges were trumped up against persons of all ranks and conditions, merely for the purpose of extorting money. At last he hit on the device of claiming on his birthday a piece of gold, by way of present, from every citizen of Rome; five drachmas, or somewhat above three shillings of our money, from persons of senatorial rank in the other towns of the Roman empire. In the whole body of senators there was only one who would not stoop to conform to the caprices of the despot, held himself free from those humiliations to which his compeers slavishly submitted, and preferred the vindication of his dignity as a man, and of his well-won reputation, to his life. Claudius Pompeianus, one of Marcus's friends, though he suffered his sons to be present at the public games, and to vie with the other senators in applauses of the emperor, on his own part declared he would rather die than see the son of Marcus Aurelius, the ruler of the Roman empire, dishonour himself thus publicly.

All historians are agreed, that the tyranny and cruelty of the emperor at length arrived at a pitch of frenzy approaching to madness; that he meditated adding to the list of his victims his favourite concubine, his prefect Lætus, and the highest officer in the imperial household, Eclectus; and that these individuals, who of course were nearest to his person, took his life, without any concerted plan or settled arrangement, simply to preserve their own. Of the immediate occasions of the catastrophe different versions are extant; but all accounts agree that his above three confidential servants, the partners of all his pleasures, were the authors of his death. It is said they first administered poison, and, as that failed of effect, got in a public wrestler to strangle him. It is not ascertained that the then city prefect, Pertinax, knew of the murder: it seems probable that the conspirators selected him as emperor, in

order to justify their deed by the choice of a man of unimpeached character, popular with the senate. It looks suspicious, however, that, immediately after his election, Pertinax justified Lætus in the senate, and appeared in public, attended by him, together with Marcia and Eclectus.

At the epoch when the slayers of Commodus proclaimed Helvius Pertinax his successor, he was a man of eight or nine and sixty, had been one of Marcus's old friends, and had been spared by Commodus chiefly because, with all activity and frugality, he had only acquired a very moderate property. The greater was the virtue of Pertinax, the greater favourite he was with the senate and its individual members, the more he was inevitably hated by the guards, who, like the guards of all tyrants, adhered much more firmly to a Nero, a Domitian, or a Commodus, who favoured and needed them, than to the best and noblest of men, when such an one happened to ascend the throne. Pertinax had shown distinguished merits in the field, and in the peaceable functions of public administration. Perennis left him three years on his estates in Liguria; and, after his death, Pertinax was employed in Britain, where he re-established the discipline of the armies, and fought bravely at their head. Finally he became city prefect. He himself felt that he should hardly be able to keep his footing long at the head of the government, though he began by a measure popular with the real sovereigns of the empire, by promising every private of the guard the enormous sum of three thousand drachmas, which he afterwards paid from the proceeds of the sale of the late emperor's valuables. Accordingly, he begged the senate to choose another ruler, and neither proclaimed his son Cæsar, nor permitted his wife imperial honours. The senate contributed not a little to irritate the soldiery, whose idol Commodus had been, against the new emperor, by passing a string of decrees to annul all the regulations and all the grants

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made by the late government. Commodus was proclaimed to have been an enemy to his country; his statues were overthrown, his name erased from inscriptions, and even his corpse would have ignominiously been thrown into the Tiber, if this had not been prevented by Pertinax. In these measures may be easily detected the cowardice and meanness of the very same people who had previously submitted to indignities of every kind, and now, that it was too late, besides being superfluous, as no one undertook the defence of Commodus, raged against his memory like the meanest of the populace.

Capitolinus has inserted, in his motley collection of anecdotes, a variety of stories in disparagement of Pertinax. There, however, seems to be only one valid ground of reproach against him,—that he showed too soon the seriousness and severity of advanced age, while the people and the soldiery had so lately been accustomed to the levity and pleasures of a youthful prince. The friendship of the senate could be of little use to the new emperor. Followers and family connections he had none. Even Lætus, who had hoped to govern under his name, was untrue to him; and Eclectus alone remained at his side, even in the instant of danger. It is not to be wondered at, then, if his reign was of brief duration.

Soon after his entrance on his government, Pertinax had felt himself compelled to secure to the soldiery all the favours which had been granted them under that of his predecessors. This concession, however, like his above-mentioned lavish donation, was fruitless, as he showed inexorable rigour in checking the violence and licentiousness, the drunken and dissolute habits in which the soldiery had been permitted to indulge by the late government. Dio Cassius, who, as being himself a senator, must have been best acquainted with transactions to which he was a party and witness, expressly says, what other writers only suspect, that Lætus himself incited the guards to mutiny. Two or

three hundred of their number, probably foreign or barbarian recruits, marched out of their camp against the imperial residence unopposed. The whole camp broke out in open mutiny; and Lætus, whom Pertinax sent to appease them, faithlessly withdrew from the tumult, without having made the slightest attempt to calm it. At length Pertinax himself came out to meet the soldiery, and, at first, inspired them with awe by word and gesture, till a soldier from the neighbourhood of Liege, seeing his comrades hesitate, rushed fiercely with his drawn sword on the emperor, and drew the others after him by his example. The only person who remained true to him in the last moment, Eclectus, also fell by the side of his emperor.

The general consternation in Rome, created by the sight of the head of Pertinax, paraded by the soldiers as a public spectacle, gave the Prætorians the absolute disposal of the empire; and Sulpician, the father-in-law of Pertinax, whom he had sent into the camp to appease them, was not ashamed to make formal proposals to purchase the empire from the soldiery. This suggested the scandalous and ignominious resolution of putting the Roman empire up to auction to the highest bidder. According to Herodian, this sale of the Roman empire was formally and deliberately transacted. Dio Cassius affirms, with more probability, that the soldiers feared Sulpician might meditate to revenge the death of Commodus on his murderers; and that, consequently, they listened to the proposals of another senator, Didius Julian, who had formally assured them of pardon and oblivion of their mutiny. Julian hastened to the camp, in the interior of which was Sulpician: the gates were closed; a soldier on the walls made proclamation of the offers of the candidates; and thus was an example afforded of a regular sale, by auction, of the empire. Finally, Julian having promised to double what Pertinax had given (6250 drachmas), the empire was knocked down to him. But this was too revolting a

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mode of attaining the imperial dignity; and Julian was himself too insignificant to maintain his footing. His person, besides, was indifferent to the soldiery, despised by the senate; and the legions declared themselves against him in three places at once. Septimius Severus in Pannonia, Spurius Albinus in Britain, and Pescenninus Niger in Syria, were called upon by the army to march to Rome, and revenge the murder of Pertinax. Severus and Niger were instantly proclaimed emperors by their respective legions. As the latter was the favourite of the senate, and had received a direct invitation from Rome, to aid against Julian and the guards, Severus endeavoured to gain over the third candidate, Sp. Albinus, and nominated him Cæsar, when himself on the point of marching on Rome.

In the meanwhile, it is said that Julian, having discovered that his own enormous private wealth was insufficient, even with the aid of the public treasury, to pay the extravagant sum which he had promised to the soldiery, resolved, at any rate, to enjoy the benefits of his purchase as long as he could, and gave himself up to the pleasures of the table. However, on the intelligence of the advance of the Illyrian troops, he neglected no measures of defence; he found means to pay the guards, not the promised donative only, but even larger sums than he had promised; sent a deputation of the senate to Severus's legions; caused great preparations to be made for fortifying the palace, and a fortified encampment to be pitched in the neighbourhood of the city. All these preparations, however, were fruitless, as he had neglected to occupy the passes of the Alps, and could place no dependence on the senate, or even on the guards. Severus, with 600 picked troops, hastened up by forced marches before the rest of his army; the troops posted in the passes of the Apennines went over to him; and even the Prætorians deserted their emperor, on assurances of pardon and oblivion. The senate, which had deferred to the last moment distinctly declaring itself, had no sooner learned the re-

volt of the Prætorians, than it declared for Severus, sent a deputation to him, and caused the unfortunate Julian to be secretly decapitated, and the head to be exposed publicly.

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In this manner even the semblance of a constitution vanished in the Roman empire. The rigours of Severus, however, though they may here and there have been overstrained, were yet eminently conducive to the preservation of that empire. He did not lay his arms down for a moment: even before he arrived in Rome, he caused those to be executed who had taken part in the murder of Pertinax; caused the Prætorians to be marched from the city to his camp; surrounded them with his troops; disarmed and dismissed them ignominiously, with the order not to show themselves within the distance of thirty leagues from Rome.

Immediately after his entrance into Rome, Severus issued orders to his land and sea forces to put themselves in motion against Pescenninus Niger, who had let pass the most favourable moments; had abandoned himself at the most unsuitable time to his amusements at Antioch, and delayed the fortification of Byzantium, and the supply of that place with all the necessary munitions of war, to serve him as a *point d'appui*, and check Severus in his advance, until he learned that his enemy's march against him was actually commenced. Byzantium held out, indeed, against the enemy to the third year; but the generals of Severus beat the enemy thrice, at Cyzicus, Nicæa, and Issus; and Pescenninus himself was slain in his flight after the loss of the third battle. Severus commanded in person in some of the battles which he won; Pescenninus Niger only in the last, in which he had opposed to him Valerianus and Anulinus.

Dio Cassius's description of Byzantium, as it existed at that period, compared with what it became after rising again out of its ruins, and becoming one of the capitals of the eastern world, is of high interest. In the desperate defence which was maintained by its

burghers against Severus, from whom they could hope no mercy, the historian's countryman, Priscus, eminently distinguished himself as an engineer; and, after its capture, he alone, who, of all its defenders, had most deserved the emperor's anger, was spared; for Severus meant to make use of him in the siege of the fort of Atra, the citadel of an independent tribe near the Euphrates, whose chief had been a friend of his defeated rival. This fort had before cost Trajan a great part of his army, without his having, after all, been able to take it. Severus's intended undertaking against Atra, and another against the Parthians, were, however, interrupted by the intelligence which he received from Rome.

Mutual causes of complaint had arisen between Severus and his colleague in the empire, Spurius Albinus, who had by this time discovered that he had only ostensibly been associated in the government, and that, since the defeat of Pescenninus Niger, little more remained for him to hope. Albinus charged Severus with having sent him friendly letters by people commissioned to get rid of him by means of assassination.

The decisive engagement between the two pretenders to the throne took place in the neighbourhood of Lyons, and the forces on either side amounted to about 150,000 men. This battle cost the Roman empire the sinews of its strength, the best of its fighters, whose place could afterwards only be supplied with barbarians.

After his victory over Spurius Albinus, Severus treated the followers of his late rival in Gaul and Rome as he had before the friends of Pescenninus Niger in the east. He had sent the head of the latter to Rome, and now also publicly exposed that of the former. Britain he divided into two provinces, as a single representative, in an island so remote, seemed to him too dangerous. Towards the senate he displayed his ill-will in every possible manner. Two-and-forty senators, most of them men who had held the highest dignities of the empire, were executed soon after his return. He said openly,

that people like the Roman senators of his times deserved no better emperor than Commodus; that he now perceived how wholesome had the sway of that prince been as a scourge of God to the first ranks in Rome, who had neither faith, truth, nor morality: that he now, for the first time, knew how to appreciate his merits; acknowledged him as a brother; and held him worthy of divine honours.

In Rome Severus devoted his whole time to correcting the irruption of abuses, and to the cares of legislation and government. The severity and violence, the restlessness and cruelties, with which he is charged, as well as his dread of plots, are to be viewed less as personal faults of Severus, than as general characteristics of the natives of Africa, where the emperor had been born and brought up. He had already destined to the succession, and nominated as joint colleagues, his two sons, Bassianus,—whom he named Antoninus, but who was afterwards better known by the nickname of Caracalla—and Geta. Next in rank to them he raised his friend and countryman Plautianus, whom he employed in affairs of every description, appointed prefect of his guards, and favoured to a pitch of absurdity. This prefect was more honoured and feared, indulged in greater expense, and ventured on acts more arbitrary, than even Severus himself, or his sons. No less arrogant than Plautianus himself was his daughter, whom he begirt with more than royal pomp and retinue. Eunuchs formed an essential part of oriental splendour; it was necessary that his daughter should have them in great numbers; and to procure them for her, he allowed himself revolting acts of violence. Next, when he assumed to play the preceptor to the young emperors, he rendered himself hated by both. Both had remained in Rome while their father pursued his eastern expeditions; and both had been corrupted by the bad company, public sports, and combats of the capital; had inured themselves to no sort of activity, whether mental or bodily; and had fallen into inveterate hos-

tility with each other, from a childish dispute about some cock-fight, or gladiatorial game. Caracalla, in particular, was in the highest degree exasperated against Plautianus, whose haughty and aspiring daughter he had been forced to marry, and treated her invariably with marked contempt. He lived in constant strife with his father-in-law, which throws an air of great improbability on the conspiracy of Plautianus against the life of Severus, which Caracalla pretended to discover and disclose to his father. Caracalla surprised his father suddenly with the news of this plot. Severus called the accused person before him, gently reproached him, and, at first, listened complacently to his defence; which Caracalla, however, soon interrupted; cut him down on the spot, and caused the severed head to be presented to his mother and wife. This one act sufficiently showed the Romans what they had to expect of their future ruler.

Whatever weakness Severus showed towards his son, his favourite, and his soldiers, he evinced himself, at least in the administration of justice, worthy of empire. He had himself, in his youth, been a jurist and a practical lawyer; presided, therefore, personally in the tribunals, and gave judgment with inexorable rigour; corrected all abuses which had crept in, in the course of time, and surrounded himself with the greatest names in jurisprudence known in history, to aid him in judicial decisions, and in legal reforms. Since the death of Plautianus, Papinian became the first of the two prefects of the guard, who, in these times, also held the administration of justice; the one taking cognizance of judicial, the other of military matters. Papinian took as assessors Paulus and Ulpian; and all three distinguished themselves in so brilliant a manner by knowledge of law and administration of justice, that in later times Valentinian III. gave the authority of a legislative decision to the opinions of Papinian. Severus displayed equal wisdom in every other branch of administration as in that of justice; and so many cordial instances of

goodness are preserved of him, that one is inclined to excuse his rigour and harshness towards those whom he deemed it necessary to punish. During his last sojourn in Rome, the city and the empire had the advantage to be governed by a man of stern and serious temper, who, as a private subject, had made himself acquainted with the various branches of law and administration, civil and military, from the business of life, not solely from books and abstract studies.

It is impossible exactly to say what tempted the emperor, at an advanced period of life, and in an infirm state of health, to undertake an expedition to Britain, merely to chastise the Scottish Highlanders for their incursions in the Roman province. It certainly cannot have been the rage for military glory. It is supposed by some writers that Severus wished to cut out occupation for his troops; by others, that he wished to withdraw his sons from the pleasures and temptations of the capital. The latter motive seems not improbable, and is confirmed by the accounts of the exasperation shown by the elder against his father, and the attempt he is said to have made upon his life.

Severus remained three years in Britain. He penetrated into the remotest Highland fastnesses; cleared woods; made bridges over rivers; made roads over morasses; turned the courses of streams. By the severities of these campaigns and the ambuscades of the barbarous enemy above 40,000 men perished: in one year, however, Severus saw the loss of all he had won; and, suitably to his vehement temper, shortly before his death conceived the thought of wholly extirpating the native population.

However boundless and blinded was the love of Severus towards his sons, he nevertheless perceived at length, during his stay in Britain, that both of them, but especially the eldest, were wholly incorrigible. He could not, however, make up his mind on taking strong measures towards him, though he himself often had accused Marcus Aurelius of not having preferred

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his duty towards the empire, and towards humanity, to his love for his son, and excluded him from the empire. Caracalla, it seems, had openly attempted his father's life, and had been bitterly upbraided by him for it, in presence of the prefects and of the whole court; had in no respect reformed his conduct; and yet it was in vain that the prefects exerted themselves to work up Severus to exemplary rigour. Often he resolved to order his son to execution; but paternal love always held him back. The unfinished war in Scotland; the disunion of his sons; their cruel and base disposition; his own penitence for many cruelties, probably aided a painful disease in troubling the last hours of Severus. He is even said to have asked for poison, to bring his life to an end more quickly. He died at York (A. D. 211). The succession of the empire having been previously secured jointly to the two brothers, Caracalla and Geta, and the soldiery equally well inclined towards both, the former was compelled, however unwilling to hold divided sway, to recognise his brother as his colleague. Geta would seem not to have been much better than his brother, though his character had a fairer side; and, perhaps, he was not so hard and merciless. Dio Cassius relates of both, that they were used to debauch married women, and corrupt youths to the instruments of their pleasure; that they practised every means of extorting money; made fellowship with gladiators and charioteers in the public races; and sought, in short, to excel each other in feats of folly and madness, living, meanwhile, in unintermitting enmity. This hostility between the brothers brought on a proposal for the partition of the empire, which would, perhaps, have been mutually acceded to, if the empress mother had not been opposed to it. Caracalla over-matched his brother in cunning as in energy; and if Geta did not sooner fall a victim to his repeated plans of assassination, he was principally indebted for it to the watchful care of his mother, Julia Domina; in whose arms, however, he was at length surprised and murdered by his

brother's satellites. Severus plumed himself much on having enormously augmented the numbers of the soldiery, having increased the guards fourfold, and having amassed very considerable treasures. All this, however, only proved destructive to the empire under Caracalla's government, as every other order of men was sacrificed to the soldiery. The guards were now not only encamped in the stations at first assigned to them near the capital, but another fortified camp was besides established on the heights of Alba. Neither of these divisions of the guards approved the murder of Geta: those near Alba long refused to admit the imperial assassin within their gates; and he was obliged to purchase the others by a large donative — 2500 drachmas for each individual soldier.

The sequel was in perfect accordance with this beginning, and with the character of the new emperor. At first, indeed, he spared the former friends of his brother; but it was not long before all who had even had the slightest connection with him atoned for the offence with their lives. Dio Cassius reckons at 20,000 the number of those who were executed, one after another, as having been friends of Geta, or in some manner attached to his court — men, women, and children. Among the victims were Papinianus, to whose guardianship his father had commended him, and Cilo, who had brought him up.

All the tyrants by whom the Roman empire was cursed were also spendthrifts. Caracalla likewise squandered, in a short time, all the savings of the preceding administration. He openly acknowledged to the soldiery that he himself and the whole empire depended on them: to satiate their rapacity, and procure the means for his own prodigalities, the emperor was forced to resort to the ways of a Nero, Domitian, and Commodus. He caused the rich to be executed, in order to confiscate their property; and changed the constitution of the empire, in order to enrich his treasury. Heretofore the

Italians, and especially the citizens of Rome, had been the principal victims when the emperors aimed at enriching themselves by means of confiscations ; but, as Italy by degrees lost its wealth, Caracalla scoured the provinces, and there perpetrated all that his predecessors had perpetrated in Rome. He surrounded himself with Sarmatian and German barbarians, and neglected no means of attaching them to his person. He accompanied the soldiers in their marches, occupations, amusements, toils, privations, and hardships. He took into his service whole hordes of the Germans, aped them in their habits and manners ; and even wore false hair, in order to resemble them in the very hue of their flaxen locks : all this to protect himself against the peaceful citizens whom he ill-treated by means of rude soldiers and barbarians ; at whose hands, during all this time, he was purchasing peace with immense sums of money, and thereby only encouraging the encroachments, which became more and more threatening, of the tribes on the northern and western frontier.

After a fruitless expedition against the Chatti and Alemanni, Caracalla proceeded down the Danube to Thrace, where he played the same part which he had played in Germany. He provoked, without subjugating, the Getæ, but did not dare to march into Dacia, which suffered from the inroads of the Lombards. As a common soldier, indeed, he did his duty ; but as a general and an emperor, he made himself contemptible. In Alexandria he assembled the citizens, who had received him with the utmost possible honour and solemnity ; treacherously surrounded the place of meeting with his soldiers ; and gave orders for the indiscriminate slaughter of all present. The number of the victims was increased by the precipitating of a number of men alive into enormous pits, which had been dug for the bodies of the murdered, and by many of the soldiers themselves being dragged down along with them into these pits by the victims of imperial fury. No other known cause can be assigned for these frightful outrages than that, at an

earlier period, before the emperor visited their city, the Alexandrians had indulged in bitter scoffs at him. It seems certain that the scene of slaughter continued several days and nights; but the variations in the narratives of its two principal historians are so considerable, that we cannot help suspecting the very turbulent population of Alexandria had not behaved quite so peaceably as some writers would have us believe, and that the measure had not altogether been without provocation. This might also be concluded from the facts, contained in the narrative, that Caracalla expelled from the city all strangers and sojourners excepting tradespeople; prohibited all numerous assemblies, and even public games and spectacles; and even divided from each other by walls the several quarters of that immense city, to cut off all communications between them. However, these arrangements had no permanence.

The accounts of Caracalla's expeditions into the Parthian territory; his betrothing with a Parthian princess; his treachery on occasion of a splendid banquet given him as the betrothed of the princess royal; the massacre and plunder which he committed on the unarmed assemblage, are known to us from Herodian only, whose narratives are so wild and romantic, that we cannot feel assured of their truth. The whole recital sounds far more probable as given by Xipholinus from Dio Cassius. According to this account Caracalla, after returning from Egypt, made an unexpected inroad on Media, and perpetrated infinite ravages before the Parthians had time to prepare for their defence, enfeebled as they were by intestine discords and a disputed succession. The winter after his desolating inroad on Media Caracalla spent in Edessa, with the intention, in the following summer, of marching against the Parthians, who had prepared meanwhile to take the field; but was assassinated during his march by a plot of the prefect of his Prætorians.

Historians are fully agreed as to the facts, that some of the officers of the guard, and a captain of the name of Martial, gained by Macrinus, perpetrated the murder

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of the emperor, and that the murderers were themselves slaughtered immediately after the execution: on the immediate occasion of the act, however, they differ. According to the version most probable, Maternianus, who not only commanded the troops in the city, but also was prefect of the city and head of the police, had obtained intelligence that Macrinus had been questioning astrologers and other soothsayers about his own and the emperor's destiny; perhaps he had discovered, also, that he had accomplices in the capital, and thereupon communicated what he had made out to the emperor. Some intimation reached Macrinus that he was marked for destruction, and he risked nothing in attempting to anticipate the intentions of the emperor. The soldiery, however, had been latterly so highly favoured, and kept the senate in Rome and their own generals in the provinces in such terror, that no one dared to insult Caracalla's memory, as they cut to pieces all supposed to have taken the slightest part in his murder. Accordingly Macrinus and his colleagues carefully concealed all knowledge of the fatal transaction.

Four days after the death of Caracalla, the Roman empire remained without a head. It was not till the fifth, that the officers who had leagued themselves with Macrinus succeeded in gaining over to him the guards who were in Edessa, and procuring his election as emperor. Their choice was of course ratified by the senate; and Macrinus, as a pretext for a second donative to the soldiery, declared his son Diadumenianus, who was only nine years old, as his successor.

About this time the Parthians had already invaded the Roman territory, and threatened to repay Caracalla's ravages in ample measure. Macrinus hastened to meet them, but seems not to have been fortunate in the two successive engagements which took place: at all events he soon engaged in negotiations with them, restored the preceding year's plunder, and paid so considerable a sum (Dio Cassius states it at fifty million drachmas) as an indemnity for the costs of the war, that the ac-

curacy of the account may well be called into some doubt, as it is not easy to conceive how he could bring such an amount together.

With ordinary prudence Macrinus perhaps might have kept his footing, though it gradually became notorious that he had caused Caracalla's murder. However, he was too secure ; and, instead of hastening to Rome, protracted his stay too long in Syria, where neither his personal bearing nor conduct were such as to conciliate to him the suffrage of the wise and well-intentioned. His answers to those who approached him were abrupt and unfriendly ; his dress repugnant to Roman ideas, blazing with gems, and flowing with eastern drapery ; his former application in the affairs of administration and justice slackened ; he became voluptuous, lazy, and effeminate. Add to this, that he kept together an army discontented with the manner in which the Parthian war had been terminated, and he even attempted unseasonably to introduce a stricter discipline. That the provincials might no longer be harassed by the quartering of soldiers upon them, the soldiery were consigned to separate barracks or encampments ; military offences punished with rigour, and attempts to resist the regulations visited by decimating the ranks. The emperor himself lived luxuriously in Antioch ; while the army, with whom his predecessor had shared every extravagance, often suffered the want of absolute necessaries. Macrinus, indeed, durst not withdraw the subsidies and various favours which Caracalla had lavished on the army ; he however declared that only the old soldiers should enjoy them, while the new recruits should have nothing beyond the ordinary rate of pay : thence arose discontents and jealousies.

Caracalla's maternal aunt Mæsa had been exiled by Macrinus into Syria, and lived with her two daughters, Mammæa and Soæmis, and their sons, in the enjoyment of great wealth at Emesa. Their riches were deposited in a splendid temple of the sun, the Syrian deity, where the brilliant part of a Syrian priest of the sun was per-

formed by Bassianus, the son of Soæmis. Bassianus was young and beautiful ; the dress and paraphernalia of a Syrian priest were splendid ; a division of the Roman army lay in a fortified camp near Emesa ; the soldiers admired the young man's appearance on festal and solemn occasions ; he was given out for the son of Caracalla, and the two women, shameless enough to countenance the rumour, spared no expense to gain over the soldiery to their interests. When all was prepared, Mæsa appeared in the fortified camp with her nephew Bassianus, afterwards called by the name of his god Heliogabalus, who was saluted by the soldiers as emperor. Macrinus, not being himself capable of heading an army, preferred sending the prefect of the guards, Ulpius Julian, against Heliogabalus and his adherents. These troops were, however, tempted to mutiny, and Julian himself lost his life.

The plainest proofs of indecision and cowardice had in the mean time been exhibited by Macrinus. He had written to the senate ; had promised to the Roman people festivities, to the soldiery the full payment of all Caracalla had granted them ; had gone at first to Apamea with a division of the army, but then forsook his followers, and hastened back to Antioch. The natural effect of this indecision was the desertion of his troops ; even those he had left behind in Apamea went over to the enemy. Heliogabalus, at the head of the Syrian troops, who had already sworn to him, and of those Romans who had deserted at Apamea, advanced to meet the enemy, whom he found nine or ten leagues from Antioch, at the head of his guards. The action seemed at first turning in favour of Macrinus ; the Syrian troops gave way before the firmness of the imperial guards, till Mæsa and Soæmis appeared, and succeeded by their urgent instances in bringing back the fugitives into the action. Heliogabalus appeared on horseback, sword in hand, in the thick of the action, and manifested a degree of resolution and courage from which better hopes might have been drawn than were in the sequel

realised. Macrinus, on the other hand, did not even await the result of this action, but fled while his Prætorians were still fighting. It was not till after waiting a whole day for his reappearance, that these brave troops accepted the terms proposed by Heliogabalus, who offered them all the advantages they had enjoyed under Macrinus. The latter, in the mean time, was detained by contrary winds in Chalcedon, where he was apprehended by the people sent after him by Heliogabalus, transported to Cappadocia, and, in attempting to escape, despatched. Diadumenianus his son, of but ten years of age, shared his fate.

The foregoing government had lasted only fourteen months. Of the three women who overthrew it, conjointly with their confidants, Mæsa was the only one who had any views of personal ambition. Accordingly the effective powers of government fell principally into her hands. Heliogabalus himself, a youth of fifteen, accustomed from his childhood to the effeminacy, festivity, glitter, and revelling of Syrian towns and temples, and finding himself at once in possession of limitless power and wealth as unbounded, rushed headlong into every folly, and steeped himself in every vice which could be prompted by a vitiated fancy, excited senses, and youthful caprice. Even in Nicomedia, where he made some stay, he gave himself up to all sorts of excesses, in which he was encouraged by his mother; while his grandmother Mæsa tried every means of keeping him at least within the bounds of external decency. When he arrived in Rome, every day was signalised by some fresh display of vice or extravagance. Even his very apparel and head-dress were strange and unmanly in Roman eyes; his familiar circles profligate; those whom he had raised, or allowed to be raised, to public offices, unfit in all respects. Mæsa soon perceived that he was too childish and reckless to be maintained on the throne for any long period. She therefore determined to thrust him aside, and substitute one better fitted to secure the powers of government in her

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family. She waited, however, for four years, before she resolved on extreme measures; and accordingly gave him time to push his tyranny to the utmost. The business of the government was wholly transacted by these women; Mæsa and Soæmis even appearing in the senate,—an exhibition which had been made neither by Livia nor Agrippina. The youth himself was engrossed with the most frivolous amusements, or with the mummeries of the mystical and symbolical service of Syrian deities, which were linked with the most scandalous practices. In his lewd and lavish sacrificial feasts and processions, he was fond of grotesquely combining the observances of the most different nations, countries, and times. At once voluptuous and cruel, he committed the most outrageous acts in every sense, without shame or reserve; propitiated his deities with human victims; as Baalim and Moloch, whom he held in especial honour, had been propitiated by them of old time, and caused presages of futurity to be drawn from the entrails of slaughtered children. Withal he spared neither the most deserving nor the most honoured heads, when, in any access of caprice, he had chanced to conceive suspicion against them.

Mæsa, as we have above hinted, so soon as she was clearly aware of the madness of one grandson, turned her preference towards the other. This other was Alexianus, afterwards known as Alexander Severus, whom his mother Mammæa had educated admirably. While Soæmis had allowed her son, from childhood upwards, entirely to follow his own humours, Mammæa, on the contrary, watched the conduct of hers with the utmost vigilance. She contrived with great art to get him adopted in the place of a son by Heliogabalus himself, and presented by him as his colleague in the empire to the soldiery, although he was then only twelve years old. Mæsa and Mammæa next endeavoured to gain over to him the senate and the soldiery; and in this they succeeded the more easily, the more despicable Heliogabalus had made himself.

The latter, on the other hand, sought means to rid himself of his cousin. First, he tried to make use of the senate, to annul all he had previously done for his advancement; but every thing he proposed against Alexander was received with such profound silence, that he found himself compelled to resort to other means to effect his object. After more than one secret attempt at assassination, he openly sent the instruments of his cruelties with a commission to despatch him. This proceeding not only failed, but gave the tyrant occasion to hear, that not he, but the army, in effect ruled the empire. The soldiery took Alexander under their protection; and the emperor's life was only saved by the prayers of his adherents, and by his own promises to amend his manner of life and government.

From thenceforwards Mammæa devoted her efforts to make a party for her son in the camp; while, on the other hand, Heliogabalus did his utmost to rid himself of his too popular rival. The first open attempt having been frustrated, he set about a second more cautiously. First he attempted gradually to withdraw his cousin from the eyes of the people and the soldiers; and accordingly kept him some time secluded in the palace. Again, however, Heliogabalus had the conviction forced on him, that he could only avoid destruction for himself by giving up his designs against his cousin. The soldiers had already shut the gates of their camp, refused the usual guard to the emperor, and renounced their allegiance, in case Alexander should not be produced before them; when, at length, Heliogabalus appeared with all humility in company with his cousin in the camp. The emperor was received with loud demonstrations of displeasure; his cousin with loud shouts of applause. Exasperated by this reception, Heliogabalus gave orders to seize and punish the ring-leaders: Mammæa, on the other hand, stirred up her friends among the troops to resistance; and a regular engagement took place, in which the partisans of Heliogabalus were routed; and the emperor himself was

dragged from a filthy place of refuge, and slain in the arms of his mother Soæmis, who also shared his fate. Alexander remained sole emperor, under the guardianship of his grandmother; but the powers of government shortly afterwards fell into the hands of Mammæa, as Mæsa died in the course of the following year.

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There has been no female reign, with perhaps the exception of our queen Elizabeth's, more beneficent to the human race than that of the mother of Alexander Severus. Whether or no she was actually a Christian, as affirmed by Orosius, her life was in accordance with a system of philosophy which had much in common at least with Christianity. Not only the young emperor's education, but the government of the empire, was conducted on those principles. Laws did not as hitherto proceed from the imperial cabinet, but deliberation took place on every law in the senate, or in a committee of fifty-two of its members; and this committee was always summoned to decide upon the projects of government. The whole administration was conducted by a council of sixteen experienced statesmen; in the midst of whom the young prince was placed for instruction in state policy. The supreme administration of justice in the capital was committed, not to the prefect of the city, and whatever two assessors he might chance to select, but to fourteen men who had filled the consular office, and were renowned as jurists. Ulpian, the friend of Papinian, the most rigidly upright man of his times, a man more skilled in jurisprudence than any of his contemporaries, was the friend of Alexander, and the only person with whom he was used to converse in strict confidence. This alone may be regarded as the young emperor's highest praise.

How laudable soever were all the measures of this government, it is nevertheless clear, from the whole history of these times, that no rule could be durable under military mastery, unless when an emperor was at the head of affairs who inspired the soldiery with respect for his martial qualifications and experience.

This was out of the power as well of Ulpian as of Alexander ; and when the former was made prefect by the emperor, the choice was disapproved by Mammæa, perhaps on account of the danger to which it exposed Ulpian. Probably she foresaw that the soldiery would not endure his sternness and rigour ; and when at length she yielded, it soon appeared her forebodings had been justified. The discontent of the soldiers at Ulpian's regulations broke repeatedly into open insurrection ; and more than once the emperor was compelled to save the life of his prefect, by covering his person with his own purple robes. The citizens and soldiers also sometimes fell into quarrels, which assumed the aspect of regular civil warfare ; and on one occasion the emperor was reduced to look on while a conflict of this kind continued three days in the streets of Rome ; and the enraged soldiery, finding themselves at length defeated, set the citizens' houses on fire. Ulpian, who had long defended the people from the fury of the troops, was slain in the palace, at the feet of his emperor, who vainly endeavoured to protect him ; and the government was powerless to punish the known authors of the revolt.

It would be tedious to enumerate the military revolts and mutinies, which became the sole object of the cares of government ; and which Alexander recompensed with ample donatives. Even the father-in-law of the youthful emperor, to whom he had yielded great influence, sought his destruction. Alexander and his mother were compelled to consign the empress to banishment, and her father to the hand of the executioner. The empress-mother is accused by Gibbon (after Herodian) of having fabricated the plot, to raise her influence on the ruin of the emperor's beloved wife, and her ambitious father. However, whether Herodian's or Dexippus's account be adopted, the lamentable character of this reign betrayed itself daily farther. The armies became more and more unmanageable, as they gradually came to consist almost wholly of barba-

rians ; and being gathered on the frontiers in masses, could have no relations of civil life with the capital or the provinces. The greatest forces were stationed on the Danube, where the emperor himself spent some time ; and on the eastern frontier, for defence against the Parthians. In Britain, also, more troops were stationed than there had been formerly. On the Rhine the danger and number of troops were smaller.

A. D. 235. The inroads of the German nations in Gaul called the emperor to the Rhine, after an expedition against the Persians, at first prosperous, but abortive in its issue, from the influence of his mother's counsels, and excessive care of his life and health. In the above-mentioned province, a Thracian (Maximin), who had raised himself from a wrestler and common soldier to the highest military rank, commanded in chief. This man's gigantic stature, strength of body, and athletic accomplishments, had attracted the attention of Septimius Severus, who enlisted him in his guards, and promoted him to the rank of an officer. After the death of Caracalla, and even under Heliogabalus, Maximin had refused to serve, and therefore was the more distinguished under Alexander's government. When the emperor reached Mentz, he stood at the head of the new levies, which, for the most part, had been made in Pannonia. This rude Thracian, who possessed in an eminent degree the reverence and attachment of the soldiery from the banks of the Danube, regularly exercised the troops ; while the emperor, on the other hand, who was always accompanied by his mother, carelessly viewed their various evolutions, shared none of the hardships of the campaigns, but continually issued commands respecting order and discipline, which excited great discontent among the Gallic troops in particular. The young emperor, often beset with the demands and grievances of the soldiery, attempted to control them by severity, as he had done in Asia ; but now only succeeded in exciting a complete mutiny. The Gauls, who were encamped in the imme-

diate neighbourhood of Mentz, took to arms, and forced Maximin to place himself at their head. In this emergency, according to Herodian's account, the emperor behaved almost childishly; fled for refuge at last to his mother, and was slaughtered, with her, near Mentz, at Bretzenheim. A general concern was awakened in the army by the emperor's murder; which was atoned for with the lives of the perpetrators. Maximin, however, knew how to keep his place; and, in March, A. D. 235, was saluted as emperor by the ruder and more energetic part of the army.

With the beginning of the reign of so rude a barbarian, whose best qualities, such as his zeal against effeminacy and luxury, were incompatible with the habits and constitution of a refined people, begins a period, one of the most melancholy of Roman history, from the disorders and divisions of the armies, and a series of barbarian inroads, which seemed harbingers of nothing less than total dissolution, and ended in the separation of the eastern from the western half of the empire, and the founding of a new capital.

The election made by the German army, with whom were a large part of the guards, was confirmed, through fear, by the senate and the people. However, the new emperor remained with the army, made great preparations for campaigns in the interior of Germany, and excluded all from public employment who had been Alexander's friends or councillors, or had stood in relations of confidence with the senate. Two Romans of good family, Magnus and T. Quartinus, successively made the attempt to take advantage of the discontent of a part of the troops, for the overthrow of Maximin. These attempts, however, were frustrated, and formed pretexts for the most sanguinary executions. Maximin had no idea of clemency: he viewed with contempt the weakness and effeminacy of the Romans; their dread of dangers and rage for public spectacles were hateful to him. The conspiracy of Magnus cost about four thousand men their lives; and the partners in

Quartinus's revolt, which had arisen amongst the Syrian troops, and especially the picked bands of archers whom Alexander had led from Osrhoene to the Rhine, were visited with no less cruelties.

The merciless proceedings of Maximin, the unheard-of treatment inflicted by him on all persons of fortune or family, the neglect of the metropolis, which the emperor, who had adopted his son as colleague, never deigned even to visit, the retrenchment of the whole expenditure made in public games and spectacles, the profuse bounties lavished on the rudest part of the army, the decay of every civil establishment, had long in the highest degree embittered the citizens; till, at length, an order to appropriate the funds set apart in the towns for the purchase of corn, as well as legacies, or other property of private individuals, to the use of the state, or, in other words, the soldiery, drove at length the most peaceful to despair.

Chance gave the first impulse to revolt in Africa. Two young men of good family, condemned to pay an enormous fine, roused up their clients and tenants against the officer of the imperial treasury, who attempted to enforce the payment, and slew him. On their incitement, one of their friends assembled the people of the neighbouring country at Thysdrum, not far from Adrumetum, and proposed to them to raise to the throne the proconsul of the province, Gordian, who was eighty years old, together with his son and lieutenant, a man who had already been consul. The proposition was adopted; and the whole province concurred to set up the mild and pacific old man, and his son, who had in like manner grown up in peaceful and easy occupations, against the ruthless and warlike barbarian. No one spent a thought how the new rulers would be able to maintain their ground. The elder Gordian had long refused to take upon him the purple, and only acquiesced on constraint. The cruel slaughter of all the servants, officers, and friends of the tyrant, was the

first consequence of his election. The Roman senate had scarce received the letter, in which the choice of the Gordians was announced to it, when it declared Maximin, as it once had Nero, the enemy of his country. While it made preparations against his vengeance, his presence with an army being every day expected in Italy, and, as in the time of Pompey, despatched twenty consulars, with unlimited powers, to the several towns and districts, to carry on the levies of troops, and defend the lines of route, the populace in Rome committed shocking atrocities. The capital was for some time in a complete state of revolution.

In Africa, meanwhile, matters had taken a turn highly unfavourable. The Gordians were conquered; the land was again ruled in the name of Maximin; extermination followed resistance. Capellianus, who had been engaged in litigious contention with Gordian, was at this time governor of Mauritania, and in command of a considerable number of troops: the title of Gordian, therefore, was no sooner recognised by the senate, than he endeavoured to deprive Capellianus of his governorship. But the latter, when called on to lay down his office, declared in favour of Maximin, and marched, with a mixed force of Moors and Romans, against Carthage. The undisciplined multitude, who armed themselves in Carthage and its neighbourhood, and took the field under the younger Gordian, proved a wretched defence against regular troops: Capellianus conquered; and a numberless host of people were slaughtered. The younger Gordian fell in battle; the elder by his own hand. Capellianus wreaked his vengeance on the rebel district as furiously as Maximin himself could have done; and looked forward to partake, or to inherit, the empire.

Meanwhile Maximin, with his army, was marching towards Italy. The tidings of the death of the two Gordians, and the approach of the emperor, alarmed the senate, and hastened their choice of two new em-

perors—Clodius Papienus Maximus, a man of military experience, and Decimus Cælius Balbinus, who was thoroughly versed in public affairs. But the aristocratical system, which seemed introduced by this choice of the senate, was distasteful both to the populace and the soldiery: the multitude, therefore, with furious outcries, demanded a new emperor, who should not be the mere tool of the senate. All attempts to still the tumult failed; and as it was feared that the Prætorians, who had been alienated from Maximin by the murder of their prefect Vitalianus, might join the populace on account of their disaffection from the senate, a third emperor was nominated, a grandson of the elder Gordian, and who bore the name of his grandfather. From the scanty and incoherent accounts, which are all that have been preserved of these times, it cannot be discovered why Maximin, who commanded an overwhelming force, delayed marching on Italy, till all the provinces had declared against him, and the senate had not only levied an army, but had made every preparation to defend the towns through which Maximin must necessarily pass, and to sweep all the provisions and forage from the open country into the towns.

A. D.
237
to
238. Maximin's descent fell in the spring, when all the streams in the Istrian territory are swollen, and the march of an army is difficult. His troops were pinched with privations and hunger: the towns made an obstinate defence; and Maximus conducted with skill the preparations for the general defence of Italy; while Crispinus and Menophilus, two senators who had been delegated to Aquileia, incited the citizens of that town to a stout resistance. Men and women vied in passive fortitude and active exertions. Maximin was embittered by the stand made against him; his harshness became intolerable, even to those around him; and, as intelligence poured in on every side of the revolt of the provinces, the soldiers, who were suffering severe hardships, and who knew that Aquileia was abundantly stored with provisions, made a sacrifice of their empe-

ror, whom they slew, with his son, and recognised the new prince as named by the senate.

While these events were taking place, Maximus, with his newly levied troops, was at Ravenna. On the first tidings of Maximin's death, he hastened to Aquileia, made a donative to his army, which he ordered back to the frontiers; but unfortunately took back the guards with him to Rome, exasperated as they were with their recent humiliation. His splendid triumph appeared an affront to the honour of these troops, as no one but themselves had been vanquished; besides which, they associated themselves with the Prætorians, who had remained with Balbinus in the city, and had engaged during the absence of Maximus in sanguinary conflicts with the people and the senate. These conflicts, on the one hand, ended in murder and conflagration; on the other, in the blockade of the Prætorians in their fortified camp, and in cutting off the duct by which the Prætorian camp was supplied with water. Scarce two months elapsed betwixt the death of Maximin and the outbreaking of discontents amongst the soldiery. One day, while all the citizens were engrossed with the Capitoline games, and the emperors Maximus and Balbinus were left almost alone in the palace, the mutinous troops attacked, slew them, and led Gordian in triumph back to their camp. Gordian was their favourite commander; and when raised to the empire, chance placed an upright and instructed man, Misiheus, at the head of the guards. After the appointment of Misiheus as prefect, he married his daughter to the emperor, and carried on the government with honour and success in his name. The progress of the Persians in the East was in the mean time so considerable, that the emperor's presence in person appeared necessary. While transports were constructing on the Tigris, and preparations were making for a march through the deserts, the father-in-law of the emperor, Misiheus, died, leaving his property, which was considerable, to the city of Rome. His successor to the

prefecture and the guardianship of the young emperor, was Julius Philippus, a man of Latin extraction, born in Asia, and commonly surnamed the Arab.

Philip was a man of boundless ambition, who could not content himself with the subordinate situation which had been held by Misitheus, but even aspired himself to be emperor. He purposely excited discontents in the army, caused the young emperor to be put to death, and assumed the purple. A hasty peace was patched up with the Persian king; and Philip returned to the capital to celebrate the millennial anniversary of the empire, at the moment that its utter dissolution seemed impending. The banks of the Rhine were inundated with various German tribes; the Danube, and the provinces on its southern bank, by the Goths, and the nations in alliance with them, or following in their train; the East would have fallen to the share of the Persians, had they possessed regular armies and a well-organised system of warfare. At the same moment several of the legions saluted their leaders as emperors; and Philip himself, who had previously adopted his son as his colleague, despaired of his own fortunes when the news arrived of the double defection of the legions on the Danube and in Syria. Decius encouraged the emperor by predicting the overthrow of the rebels; but he had scarce taken his departure to Mœsia to restore order, when he himself was raised to the throne, and appeared against his emperor in the field. It was said, indeed, that he acted on compulsion, and had promised Philip, on reaching Rome, to restore the government to his hands. Philip, however, trusted not his promises, took the field against him, and was defeated and slain.

A. D.
249.

The reign of Decius was no more stable or fortunate than his predecessor's. The Goths, Burgundians, Gepidæ, and other tribes, whose names to this day are preserved in those of the countries which they afterwards took possession of, were constantly engaged in warfare, partly with each other, and partly with the Romans on both sides of the Danube. Under Philip, the Goths

had rendered tributary the whole of Dacia; under Decius, their king Cniva led a force numerically great into the Roman provinces, and laid siege to the town of Eusterium, afterwards called Novi, and afterwards to Philippopolis, which they took, having surprised and defeated a Roman army in its neighbourhood, under Decius himself or his son. It appears that Decius afterwards recovered the advantage over this enemy, but followed them too closely in their retreat; so that, driving them to desperation, they turned upon him and his army, and cut them to pieces. The Christian writers triumph on this overthrow of Decius; declaring it a judgment of God, a foretaste of the pains of hell, which awaited him for persecuting the Christians, without apparently reflecting that the numberless persons of that persuasion, who had lost life or property by the Gothic invasion, had paid dearly for the supposed punishment of their persecutor.

A. D.
251.

This rout of a Roman army, and the yearly tribute to the Goths, by which peace was purchased, disgusted the soldiery and the capital; and encouraged the Goths and their allies to new inroads upon the empire, whose chief and army were fallen; whose weakness stood confessed openly. Gallus, the general who was chosen to succeed to the empire by the scattered troops, so soon as they contrived to unite again, had imputed to him, of course, after the fashion of writers in those times, a wilful participation in the overthrow and death of his emperor; and this possibly groundless charge increased the odium which attended him for having agreed to pay tribute, and for having suffered the enemy to carry off all their booty, and all their prisoners. The incursions of the tribes on the Danube soon afterwards compelled Æmilianus, the general commanding in Pannonia, to march against them. He was fortunate enough to surprise and vanquish the force of the same nation to whom his emperor actually was tributary. He routed the Goths, recovered their plunder, and shared it amongst his own seldiers, who

A. D. 528. hailed him, out of gratitude, emperor. Gallus met the insurgent legions in Umbria, and fell on the field, with his son Volusianus.

Æmilian, indeed, assumed the vacated throne, but did not fill it a moment in security. A force had been assembled in the Grisons and the Tyrol by Valerian, to support Gallus, which, appearing in the field too late for that purpose, no sooner, however, approached the army of Æmilian, than the latter slew their emperor, in the neighbourhood of Spoleto, and Valerian was enthroned in his stead. It may easily be imagined what confusion must reign in a vast empire, in which, since the death of Alexander Severus, the government so swiftly changed hands; and the soldiery, for the most part rude barbarians, installed and deposed rulers at their pleasure. Add, that famine, pestilence, inroads of barbarians, and, especially under Decius, fierce and merciless struggles with a religion powerful and spreading itself more and more widely, distracted every province, and diffused discontent and misery everywhere; and some conception may be formed of the wretched state of the Roman empire. Even Valerian, distinguished as he was as a general, and worthy, as the senate under Decius had proclaimed him, for his virtues as an incorrupt citizen, to exercise the functions of censor, which had sunk into oblivion since the time of Claudius, could not restore the blessings of peace, order, and tranquillity. While the barbarians of the north extended their ravages on every side, and a swarm of pretenders and rival Cæsars appeared, one after the other, the East was incessantly threatened by the Persians. Valerian at length marched to meet them, to relieve Edessa, which alone withstood their attacks, or to recover from them Nisibis: he suffered himself, however, to be drawn into an ambuscade; and to fall into the hands of the Persian monarch, under pretence of a conference, and never was released from captivity.

Of the pretenders to the imperial dignity, who now hastened to contest it in the several divisions of the em-

pire with Valerian's son Gallienus, who assumed the purple on his father's capture, in the East the most prominent and long-sustained part was played by Odenathus, who may be counted, with his consort Zenobia, among the most remarkable historical personages. The military services of this chief in Asia Minor, against former pretenders to the throne, had obtained for him, from Gallienus, the government of those provinces which he had thus saved to the unity of the empire. In the midst of the desert, since the times of Solomon, Palmyra bloomed, a city and a state in itself; visited by all the caravans in their progress from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean, as a place of trade, an *entrepôt* for goods, and a point of rendezvous for traders and tribes of Arabs, who hired out their camels to transport merchandise across the desert. So soon as the Syrian dynasty of the Seleucidæ had established its sway, Palmyra adopted Grecian arts and manners, was adorned by Grecian architects with splendid public buildings and temples, preserved its prosperity even during the wars that had laid waste Syria and Palestine; and, afterwards, ranked with those Asiatic towns which, under successive emperors, were declared Roman colonies.

Odenathus would appear to have been originally a sort of leader of a clan, or ruler of a little domain, in the neighbourhood of the city of Palmyra; and, at the same time, one of the most respected of its citizens. When the Persian king advanced on the Euphrates, Odenathus at first sought, by force of presents, to win his favour; but, as the Persians disdained his overtures, he took up arms, in revenge, for Gallienus. His services in repulsing the Persian enemy, and in stripping of his adherents and destroying Callistus, or Balista, a somewhat formidable pretender to the empire, was rewarded by Gallienus with the title of generalissimo in the East (*dux Orientis*); and, afterwards, with the prouder titles of Cæsar and Augustus, which were shared by his consort and his children. Thenceforward Odenathus, during four years at least,

issued coin with his insignia as emperor. During these years Odenathus's administration was glorious: Palmyra, under his sway, and that of his consort, became one of the most magnificent cities of the East; till Odenathus himself, and his son Herodes, were assassinated at Emesa, at the treacherous instigation of a near relative, in vengeance for some real or imaginary offence. On this event, however, the government was carried on by Zenobia, with no less vigour than before.

In the western part of the empire, about this time, innumerable anti-Cæsars sprung up; of whom, however, most maintained their footing but for a short time. Tetricus alone, who had been governor of Aquitania, was recognised as ruler in Spain and in Gaul. Gallienus at length abandoned all idea of maintaining any substantial authority in the provinces beyond the Alps, as well as in the East; and, like the Persian monarchs of old times, the Great Mogul, or the Turkish emperors, contented himself with a semblance of supremacy. He appeared, however, resolved to defend Italy from all attacks; and even in the last years of his government, when he seemed entirely sunk in slothful repose, he took the field the moment that Italy was threatened by a new invader. This was Aureolus, who had fought with success against the Goths in the service of Gallienus, and was now compelled by his troops to assume the imperial title, and march upon Italy. On this occasion Gallienus evinced a degree of fortitude and activity strongly contrasted with the effeminate sloth generally ascribed to his character. He not only defeated Aureolus in a pitched battle, but shut him up in Milan, and laid siege to him during the whole winter. However, notwithstanding these unwonted exertions, Gallienus's principal officers, and amongst them Claudius, the bravest of his generals, who had vanquished the Goths, and commanded the legions in Illyria, Thrace, Mœsia, and Dacia, felt that the emperor was not equal to the emergencies of his post, and accordingly conspired his death. In order to obtain

the opportunity of effecting their purpose, the execution of which was afterwards loudly censured by the soldiery, the emperor was suddenly told that Aureolus had made a sally, and had penetrated into the camp. A Moorish officer of the Dalmatian horse executed the deed of murder, as Gallienus was springing to horse in the darkness, to place himself at the head of his troops. A. D.
268. The generals who had formed and carried through the conspiracy continued, after the death of Gallienus, the blockade of Aureolus; and offered the empire, not to him, but to Claudius, a better known and older general, who had already, as above mentioned, distinguished himself under Decius.

CHAP. III.

LIFE AND MANNERS UNDER THE PRECEDING REIGNS.

THE history of this period shows us, better than any other, that to states, as to men, destiny assigns a certain duration of life, beyond which their lot is feebleness and infirmity. Rules of living and prescriptions of art may prolong, indeed, for years, the feeble existence of age, but never renew the juices, or restore the energies of youth. How many capable rulers, how many men of acute insight and excellent intentions, successively administered the Roman empire at this period ! The first jurists that ever lived, the most distinguished officers, the ablest men of business, the most formidable bodies of troops, incomparable in organisation and discipline, were at the prince's command. Even the worst emperors did more harm to the capital and its immediate vicinity than to the provinces ; yet how visibly all sank and declined ! how perished, one after the other, all relics of their old greatness ! Civilisation gained in extent ; arts and trades flourished ; industry, commerce, every thing that can add to the ease of material life, progressed ; and a new religion taught a new morality. But the old spirit was gone : servile and egoist dispositions had come in place of patriotic feeling and civic virtue. Every where bodies without souls ! As, by degrees, all the relations of life had become changed, and from day to day underwent farther and farther changes, the laws which had been made for the republic no longer suited the condition of the empire.

In default of the existence of a legislative body, possessed of the authority which the senate had lost, and capable of adapting the old laws to the new state of things, the emperors, by degrees, began the practice of replying by rescripts to the questions brought before

them on debateable points of law ; or, where there was no law to refer to, announcing their will on each special occasion. These rescripts by degrees acquired the force of positive law, and possessed superior validity to the ancient legislation. The confusion, contradiction, and injustice, which arose from thence in life, and all its relations, were infinite. It was visible even to Trajan, that two wholly different legislatures, one founded systematically in history and the course of events, and the other wholly accidental and arbitrary, had acquired concurrent authority throughout the Roman empire. Accordingly, he answered appeals in matters of administration, government, or judicial procedure, only in private epistles ; not in the form employed by his predecessors in similar cases (*libellis*). However, Trajan's successors recurred to the old practice ; and in giving their decisions in particular cases, expected these decisions to be considered as having the force of law. In this manner the mad fancies of a Domitian, Caracalla, or Commodus, or the decrees of the female council around Heliogabalus, held co-ordinate authority with the best regulations of old times.

While, on the one hand, we find introduced in Rome Asiatic court-ceremonial, grovelling vanity, slavish splendour, and unbounded profusion ; on the other hand, the general decay of the empire, the exhaustion of its finances, the extinction of its laws, are manifest in the state of the guards and the army, their composition, and the part played by them. In the period of which we are engaged in the history, Greece, through the strife and jealousy of her towns towards each other,—Italy, through the decay of all energy of character, and all martial spirit in her people,—had lost the pre-eminence of station which formerly had belonged to them ; and the inhabitants of the frontier provinces, soon, indeed, even barbarians, obtained the leading part in all, especially military affairs.

Under Augustus, according to Dio Cassius*, only

* Lib. lv. c. 23—25.

three or five-and-twenty legions were left of all the immense bodies of troops which he and Antony, Lepidus, Brutus, and Cassius, had brought into the field in the civil wars. Under Nero, however, Galba, Vespasian, Domitian, Trajan, and Marcus Antoninus, new legions had been formed. Under Septimius Severus their number already had reached two-and-thirty. But it must here be observed, that the number of soldiers cannot be reckoned from these data. A considerable number must be added for the guards; and a number still greater for the bands of foreign mercenaries, who occupied the place of the old auxiliaries. These we meet with frequently under the name of *vexilla* or *cohortes*.

The legions were kept together in fixed and stationary encampments; thus forming a sort of military state, or *imperium in imperio*, which was only kept in any subordination by the frequent change of leaders, and transposition of the legions from one end of the empire to the other. Under Septimius Severus a particularly large proportion of military force was assigned to Britain and to Syria. At that period, we learn, three legions were stationed in Britain, one on the Upper Rhine (Germania Superior), two on the Lower Rhine (Germania Inferior), one in Italy, one in Spain, one in Numidia, one in Arabia, two in Palestine, one in Phœnicia, two in Syria, two in Mesopotamia, two in Cappadocia, two in Lower Mœsia, one in Upper Mœsia, two in Dacia, four in Pannonia, one in Noricum, one in Rhætia. Two had no permanent station, but were used, as their services were required, in different parts of the empire. From a passage of Ælius Lampridius*, the numerical strength of a legion at this period appears to have been 5000 men. This, compared with the total force of modern European armies, would appear quite insignificant, if it were not borne in mind, that the legions, in these days of degeneracy, only formed, as it were, the kernel or skeleton of the army, and still retained the discipline and arms of old Rome.

* Alex. Sever. c. l.

In these times the bulk of armies was often drawn from various nations, equally various in their weapons and order, and, perhaps, contained only one or two legions in its ranks. The guards, who formed a description of force most burthensome to the empire, which they sold over and over again, and exhausted by the donatives made them, were from time to time augmented in number. Septimius Severus not only added to their force fourfold, but opened their ranks, for the first time, to barbarians. It is true that military service had long been avoided by the Italians. The rule, however, had always been, to recruit the guards with born citizens, whether Italians, Spaniards, Macedonians, Latin inhabitants of Noricum, &c. Septimius, however, recruited his guards from the ranks of the whole army, and decreed the continuance of the practice in future. It was thought that the effeminate inhabitants of the interior provinces could no longer be made serviceable in warfare. They were, therefore, allowed to buy themselves off; and the conquerors of the world, who had formerly been free from all imposts, were now subject to an arbitrary, onerous, and disgraceful one. From this time a distinction was established betwixt the duties of the recruiting officer, who levied troops in the frontier provinces, or wherever a vigorous race of men were to be found; and the *termarius*, who raised arbitrary fines for exemption from active service in Italy, and the other regions whose inhabitants were despised as soldiers.

The expenditure required for the Roman army is not easy to calculate; as the donatives on the accession of each emperor, and extraordinary rewards and gratifications, amounted to far more than the regular pay. As the warfare on the frontiers was incessant, from the Antonines downwards, the extraordinary rewards, which were only distributed in war time, became a standing branch of expenditure. Moreover, the needy provincials and barbarians, who in those times rose to the head of armies, required to be furnished with the means

of enriching themselves at the public cost. Happy, indeed, was the empire under these reigns when the regular and ordinary modes of extortion only were practised; and the soldiers and their officers forbore from open pillage and violence, and from treating Roman ground as an enemy's country.

Since the times of Augustus, and, even more, since those of Trajan, high roads throughout the empire had been amazingly improved and extended, and practicable routes were made, as for example, that of the Splugen, which have never since been rivalled till our days. Even in Britain, Roman roads were made through the island in the times of Septimius Severus; but the making of new roads was always attended with the imposition of new and overwhelming burthens. We do not speak of the forced labours levied on the roads; since, however hard these might be, they fell alike on all property; but of other burthens and oppressions connected with the public roads. Of these, the imperial posts were, without doubt, the greatest. The continual transmission of edicts, rescripts, orders, and missions of all sorts, and all requiring instant despatch; the imperial journeys; the missions of civil and military functionaries; the march of legions from one end of the empire to the other, multiplied as these movements necessarily were by the incessant inroads of the barbarians, disturbances and revolts in the provinces, demanded a prodigious posting establishment, which was maintained at the charge of the several localities.

Where all depends on the will of a master, and every burthen falls on the industrious classes, to the sole advantage of those descriptions of men who cluster around a court, no footing is left for the class of independent citizens. An individual prince, perhaps, encourages plans of public improvement, builds towns, promotes particular branches of industry; his successor lets all his schemes drop, and the land is covered with relics of abandoned and abortive enterprise. Italy suffered

most in this way; as all imperial works, down to funerals or burial places, were there on an enormous scale, and employed the hands of innumerable labourers. Proportionately to the increase of immense private domains and palaces, the class of peasants and free citizens dwindled; and the towns became inhabited by a miserable populace. Yet all without seemed still splendid and prosperous; while all within was hollow, unsound, and tottering. The mechanism of social life appeared to have reached its highest perfection; but the spirit of old citizenship sunk for ever.

CHAP. IV.

PHILOSOPHY AND LITERATURE, FROM TRAJAN DOWNWARDS.

THE whole literature of these times bears evident traces of the prevalence of a sort of bastard enthusiasm, not of original growth, but of Græco-oriental extraction, and fed on the high imaginations imported by the Greeks from the East of some superior species of wisdom, derived to us through unknown channels, and attainable only by virtue of mysterious means and initiations. The Stoic philosophy itself, as transformed by EPICETUS, appeared under a new character. Before his times, the doctrines of Zeno had degenerated, as those of Antisthenes ; and had become a mere play of dialectical and rhetorical subtleties. Epictetus first recalled it to life, from which it had been kept at a remote distance by Seneca. A sort of philosophical opposition had been constituted hitherto by the Stoics and Cynics, which had often given umbrage even to the tolerance of the better emperors. From Epictetus, however, downwards, the doctrine of passive endurance and fortitude was exalted to the first place in the moral system of Stoicism ; and Christians have therefore claimed Epictetus as their own. He was one of those philosophers who were driven from Rome by Domitian's orders ; he took up his abode at Nicopolis in Epirus, and supported, in necessitous circumstances, the consistency of his doctrine by the course of his life. He fashioned himself a world and well-being of his own, and soon collected crowds of disciples, eager for instruction. Men of all ranks and classes sought his conversation, as admirers of his wisdom and eloquence, and were won to a doctrine which offered more than mere speculation, and seemed framed for the actual conduct of life, and the true estimation of human hap-

piness. It was thus that Arrian, the best disciple of Epictetus, embraced his doctrine, and was probably the author of that brief manual (*Enchiridion*) in which his principles are outlined from oral expositions. The whole life of the scholar was well calculated to attract consideration to the master's doctrine; for Arrian attained such distinction as a statesman and warrior, geographer, tactician, and philosopher, that Hadrian promoted him from one important post to another; and finally to the rank of a Roman senator and consul.

PLUTARCH was indifferent to both the contending schools of the day — to Stoics as to Epicureans, — and patched up himself a species of philosophy suited to the spirit and mystical tendencies of the times. He did not lose sight of actual life, like thoroughgoing enthusiasts; nor had he, like the mass of men in his own times, lost all feeling for the greatness of the earlier days of Greece and Rome. His aim was to idealise those times by poetry and rhetorical ornament; and, versed as he was in the Greek poets and philosophers of the Platonic school, to mingle the images of fancy with the realities of past history. He created in his biographies a wholly new description of historical literature, and employed in the philosophical part of his writings, according to circumstances, any philosophy, or any doctrines filched from any philosophy, which served his purpose in the subject he happened to be treating of. He therefore eschews equally the systems of Zeno and Epicurus, with the ordinary aversion of a man of the world to all extremes; but frequently shows a leaning to the doctrines of the later academy, which favoured philosophical scepticism; always however expressing himself in the manner of Bayle, who took good care to avoid standing forward openly and avowedly in opposition to currently received opinions.

The influence of Plutarch's biographies on his own times, in which poetry and enthusiasm for antiquity were in a manner extinct, would seem to have been very slight, so far as we can judge from appearances

His writings, however, rose into the highest importance, at the moment when the study of antiquity revived from its long slumber in Europe. All Plutarch's characters were so conceived as to excite, to the utmost, the juvenile enthusiasm for antiquity which prevailed at that era. His anecdotes seemed to bring before the eyes of the reader the characters and occurrences which, for the most part, they exhibit under illusive and theatrical aspects: they seldom fail, however, to surprise or amuse; it is therefore no wonder that they have become incorporated with history, and that his most apocryphal narratives have obtained wider currency in modern times than the most authentic records of antiquity.

The branches of intellectual culture which flourished most in these times, were such as required no vigour of fancy, nor independence of thought — no native and original development of the mental powers; but which either were of immediate utility to the state, or stood at least no way opposed to that disposition of mind which, in states under military government, is expected of subjects. Such departments are those of mathematical, medical, legal, and geographical science. To these may be added that sort of literature which confines its aims to mere entertainment, and escapes proscription and censorship, even under despotic sway, as a necessary of civilised existence.

In the department of medicine, GALEN, from whose writings the Arabs and the middle ages in general exclusively drew such knowledge as they had of that science, lived in the reign of M. Antoninus and his successors. He was not solely a physician and natural philosopher, but an orator and profound student of general philosophy; and from passages in his writings, in which he mentions the course of his own training, we are acquainted with a whole list of flourishing establishments for instruction in Asia Minor and the neighbouring regions.

CLAUDIUS PTOLEMÆUS, almost contemporaneously

with Galen, rendered similar services to astronomy and chronology as the former had done to the science and the branches of knowledge connected with medicine. Both leaned upon the labours of their predecessors; and cannot therefore be ranked as the original and earliest pioneers in their respective sciences. Both, however, collected and consolidated into a system all that had been done before them; filled up what had been left in outline, and completed what had been merely commenced; and both were for the Arabs, as for Europe during the middle ages, the sole source and authority for the sciences treated of in their works.

Ptolemy as well as Galen shared the superstitions and reigning absurdities of his age. He found it requisite to give himself out as a teacher of astrology, and to put together a manual of the notions then current on the influence of the heavenly constellations. It was his astrology that recommended Ptolemy to the Byzantine Greeks and to the Arabs; by both of whom astronomy was cultivated mainly for the sake of astrology. It was not till Kepler had struck out a new route, and discovered the true principles of the science, that Newton, and those who trod in his footsteps, transformed the whole system of Ptolemy. The merits of the latter were laborious research, accuracy, and order in arrangement. His great astronomical work, to which he himself gave the modest name of a mathematical *Syntaxis*, is in modern times better known by a title strangely compounded of the Arab article with a Greek adjective—*Almagest* (ἡ μεγάλη). The Arabs found in Ptolemy what they found so perfectly nowhere else, complete instruction, namely, in plane and spherical trigonometry, descriptions and directions for the use of astronomical instruments, and all the tables they required for common use. So great was the respect which was still entertained for the name of Ptolemy, even in times when his errors had become known, and in part corrected, that Kepler himself prefers to ascribe the discrepancies of the observations stated by Ptolemy from the previous

ones of Hipparchus, and from those of the moderns, to disturbance in the motions of the celestial bodies than to gross errors in the great astronomical teacher of the Greeks and Arabs.

As the astronomy of later times took rise from Ptolemy, so modern geography was founded on his eight books of geographical treatises. His third great work, which he entitled "The Canon of Kings," is not less important in chronology than the former in astronomy and geography. In this work chronology was not his main object; his "Canon" was intended to facilitate to astronomers the calculation of the period of time which had elapsed betwixt the several observations set down in his astronomical treatise. It is singular that the Ptolemaic chronology, which, with its *four universal monarchies*, supplied, till within the last century, the chronological order followed in works of ancient history, created an historical era, that of king Nabonassar of Babylon, wholly without a proper historical basis; as we neither are acquainted with any great deeds of that Nabonassar, nor was his reign ever acknowledged in his own country as a starting point for a new chronological era.

Equal merit to that of Galen and Ptolemy in their respective sciences, is that of PAUSANIAS in the history of ancient Grecian art. He combined in his work historical notices, legends, and matters of pure fiction, with the history of art, in the form of a narrative of travels in Greece. His work, which is confined wholly to Greece Proper, and neither includes Thessaly nor Macedon, is divided into ten books, coincidently with the divisions of the ten regions described in it. As Pausanias was a lover of art, and has specially addicted himself to the description of ancient masterpieces, his work, in that department, is of great value; for through him we are brought acquainted with some hundred artists and their works. In relation also to legendary histories, especially of the elder times, hints are to be found in his writings which vainly would be sought for elsewhere.

It cannot, however, be concealed that he was somewhat too much the child of his age — too much of the sophist, and the chosen companion of that Roman society which gave a marked preference to the marvellous and preternatural over the natural and intelligible — not to incur merited distrust in his narrations where the scene lies in remote antiquity, especially when we catch him in most palpable falsehoods on points where he might and must have known better. To show that he lies purposely, and against his own knowledge, we shall only cull two of his tales from innumerable others. In the first, he says he saw done by a dolphin what neither he nor any one else could have seen ; in the second, he tells wonderful stories of silkworms, or rather of the nature and production of silk, of which he must have known the absurdity from Aristotle, and the numerous natural histories derived from his works, which were, in these times, in the hands of all. How can he be trusted implicitly on points where we have no other witnesses, when he fables thus audaciously where the means of exposure were close at hand ? This is not the place to review critically the work of Pausanias. On the whole, it must be regarded as a most fortunate arrangement of destiny, that so shortly before the overthrow of the ancient religion, and the poetry and art which were linked with it, a learned writer such as Pausanias should have treated so fully of Grecian art, which in no other work of antiquity had been thought deserving of special attention.

Next to the above-mentioned writers, who were more or less children of their age and sharers in its spirit, we would name another, whose mind seized the perverseness of that age, and possessed the art of holding up a mirror to it. LUCIAN, like Voltaire, held the conviction that every thing old must first of all be annihilated by satire and mockery, before any thing better could be built up in its place. Lucian lived in the second century of the Christian era, and probably

died at the commencement of the third. He confronted an enervated age with a kind of reckless audacity, and dared to raise the veil of hypocrisy in which his generation had wrapped itself. In these times there was no more easy or lucrative trade than that of the sophists. In order to come out in that character, science was required less than boldness and readiness in discourse, and practice in style. These had been acquired by Lucian, and nature had afforded him a rich store of wit. Accordingly, after appearing for a while in the ordinary guise of sophist, and exciting some notice in that character, he set himself up as the organ of that hitherto mute party, which was secretly discontented with all the doings of the race of enthusiasts, superstitionists, mystics, and rhetorical and fabling writers.

To judge from the reception of Lucian, and the number of his readers and hearers, the multitude of those who prefer laughing to weeping had hitherto lacked only a spokesman. However, Lucian was not a mere scoffer for scoffing's sake, but because he deemed service might be done by his satire to the cause of true wisdom and of true morality. This is evident not only in his "Sale of Philosophers" [*Vitarum auctio*], from the slight or no value set on an Aristippus or Epicurus, or the comparatively high prices described as being paid for Socrates, Aristotle, and others; but also from the distinct, express, and serious declarations which Lucian gives of the purpose of his writings in "The Fisher." That purpose was, in times in which, as indeed in our own, sophists and smatterers abounded, in religion, science, philosophy, and literature, to tranquillise and solace sound understanding and unhacknied feelings, when beset with idle displays and idler controversies. He exposes all the vanity and emptiness of these learned exertions, and shows that disputes about forms, systems, and paradoxes engage the world more than zeal for genuine wisdom and virtue. This he shows with especial relation to religion and morals, in Peregrinus

Proteus, and Demonax. In both, true and false religious feeling, true and false morality, are made respectively the objects of ludicrous and of serious treatment. Lucian's contempt for Christianity and Christians may be explained, if not excused, by the disfigurements which, in his times, the evangelical doctrine had undergone from the rash aspirants to saintship and martyrdom. The established creed and received morality fared no better in Lucian's dialogues.

APULEIUS may be singled out as the chief orator, philosopher, and writer of the African schools, to show the sort of influence which the taste of his province necessarily exerted in these times on European culture. Apuleius was a most voluminous writer, but of his writings a few only have been preserved. From his other writings, particularly discourses, some one has made extracts, which are commonly annexed, under the title of "Flowers" (*libri quatuor floridorum*), to such of his entire writings as are extant. However, his greatest and most elaborate work, and that which was most read in the Latin world of these times (whether his pious readers might or might not confess it), was his "Milesian Histories," or "Golden Ass," also known by the title of "Metamorphoses." He was not, indeed, the inventor of this species of writing; he is not original in this, or in any other of his remaining writings: where, indeed, was an original writer in these times to be found? His extant works, however, may be regarded as an epitome of the whole literature of that degenerate period. The romance or tale, or, if you will, series of tales, of the "Golden Ass," guides us into the inmost life of these times, and clearly reveals to us the deep degradation of a race who had nothing left them but indulgence in enthusiastic visions, or unbridled debauchery; since they were shut out from every field of liberal exertion, and all participation in the management of public affairs.

The more entertaining and amusing are Apuleius's

stories, the more pains he takes to proceed only by the gentlest gradations in exciting the fancy, and calling up images of sensual pleasure ; the more he studies to present the scenes which he delineates as merely the manners of the times, as something of every-day occurrence, the more pernicious the influence of his writings. We know for certain, that Apuleius's story is no invention of his ; but whether he derived it from Lucian, or from a certain Lucius of Patræ, in Achaia, is matter of dispute with the learned. Annotators have found in Apuleius problems to solve, and enigmas to interpret ; what Roman readers sought in his writings was, the excitement of the fancy by his slippery and equivocal meanings, leaving to others the critical examination of language and idiom. Apuleius himself acknowledged that his style was barbarous, and excused himself by pleading his African birth mended by Greek breeding.

It may be said, in general terms, of the philosophical portion of his writings, that their aim was to familiarise the Latin world, and especially the public of degenerate and depraved times, with the ideas of Plato, and here and there with the doctrines of Aristotle ; and that accordingly they severed from their natural connection and order, and moulded into a scheme of superstitious and visionary illusion, thoughts and expressions which produce quite a different effect in the connection, in the garb and place which they hold in the originals.

In the philosophy of the times from Antoninus Pius to Julian the New Platonists took the most conspicuous place, extended their schools from the eastern to the western extremity of the empire, and looked down on all other sects with great contempt. In the East, and soon afterwards also in the schools of Athens, the philosophy of Plato in the times of the Roman emperors had assumed quite a peculiar shape. Especial pains were taken in the elucidation of those parts of philosophy which Plato had either derived from the East, or borrowed from Pythagoras, or converted from myths and poems to his use.

Platonic doctrines, in this shape, were available to Philo and others, for bringing the religions of the East into philosophical form ; and the Christians also, as well Gnostics as orthodox, had used what was called Platonism in Alexandria, long before Origen, in the construction of their fanciful systems on the relation of divine to human nature. In Hadrian's times, and those immediately subsequent, there took place a new modification of doctrine. Already before that period Plato and Pythagoras had always been associated together ; the anniversaries of their birth had been celebrated in one and the same manner in the schools of the Platonists ; both had been objects of veneration, as a sort of saints, or good dæmons ; the sentences of both regarded as oracles. Immediately after the time of Hadrian, commenced the undertaking of reconciling Aristotle, and the other philosophers of the dogmatical sects, by subtle interpretations, with the Platonic system as understood previously. Thus arose New Platonism ; which afterwards was also known by the title of Pythagoreism. Many causes conspired to make this so-called New Platonism the fashionable philosophy of the times. Amongst these may be reckoned the shallowness of the sophists and rhetoricians ; the unsatisfactory nature of the sceptical philosophy, the disfigurements of the Stoic and Cynic doctrine, and the dryness of the Aristotelians, strictly so called. The original talents of Ammonius Sakkas and Plotinus, and the well-known inclination of mankind to take for wisdom what they do not in the least understand, may also have promoted the rapid diffusion of the new system.

The honour of founding the new sect is attributed to Ammonius Sakkas of Alexandria ; it is difficult to say on what positive grounds. It is, however, undeniable that his scholar Plotinus became the principal writer, a new Pythagoras, of this sect. On addicting himself to the Aristotelian philosophy, Ammonius found the Aristotelians and Platonists at daggers drawn.

He thought he could unite both systems, and appears, from the life of the philosopher Isidorus by Damascius, to have been at least a good expounder of Aristotle.

Plotinus, for eleven years a zealous disciple of Ammonius, was plunged in such profound inquisition of the inward essence of divine and human nature, that, unsatisfied with Egyptian, he sought after Persian and Indian wisdom. He accompanied the younger Gordian in his expedition against the Persians; but his Indian and Persian researches do not seem to have gone to any great extent. Either he confided not enough in his oratory to make the East his field for exertion, or he knew the disposition of the higher orders in Rome, and the prevailing passion for oriental mysticism;—he therefore turned his course to Rome, where he soon got the renown of a prophet. Amongst his devotees were the emperor Gallienus and his wife Salonina. It is even said they had meant to make the experiment of founding, in some town of Italy, a philosophical state according to his doctrines. This, perhaps, would have been the best way of demonstrating clearly to all generations the impracticable nature of the theories which he passed current for wisdom more than earthly.

The means employed by the propagators of this new doctrine, were much the same as those employed by Mesmer and Cagliostro to beguile the modish world in France towards the close of the eighteenth century, and by the traffickers in similar mystic juggleries at all times. Plotinus, we are informed by his scholar Porphyry, was a powerful magician, who could summon before him not only devils, but also spirits of higher rank.* He is recorded to have said to his friends, who invited him to attend at a sacrifice, that it did not suit him to go to the gods, as the gods came to him. The writings of Plotinus were composed also prophetically; for, according to the account of Porphyry, he wrote down his in-

spirations without vouchsafing afterwards to look at them, or even to correct slips of the pen. Not thus, truly, were the Greek masterpieces produced !

Three scholars of Plotinus became the apostles of his doctrine,—Herennius, Ammonius, and Porphyrius; all men of distinguished talent. Fragments only of Herennius have come down to our times; Æmilius and Porphyry diffused widely the doctrines of their master in the West and the East: Porphyry taught in Rome, and even the Christians themselves did not disdain to draw from the troubled fountain of his metaphysics. The influence of the Latin translations and versions of the new Platonist writers on the doctrines of the most illustrious fathers of the Christian church, is one of the most important points in the subsequent intellectual history. The confessions of Augustine present to us himself, and many of the most noted of his brethren, as first having derived from these writers their ideas of the Christian doctrine.

The complete investigation of the philosophy of these times must be left to writers on that special subject: history is only concerned about eminent individuals, as they influenced the prevailing habits of mind in their own and in later ages. Longinus, in the prefatory discourse which has been introduced by Porphyry in his life of Plotinus, enumerates, as the sects then prevalent, only the Platonists, Stoics, and Peripatetics; and probably directed his attention to those only. The Cynics ought to be added to the list, were it merely because Demonax, exclusively of all his contemporary philosophers, has found a panegyrist in Lucian. Some men of high powers, amongst whom were Hermogenes and Longinus, abandoned the pursuit of philosophy, when there was no getting on but by dint of exaggeration and obscure phrasology, for the theory of taste and of rhetoric, and wrote manuals comprising, in a moderate space, all that had been done in that department since Aristotle.

LONGINUS possessed more than one title to a place among philosophers; though his writings, if we may judge from their remains, and, in particular, from the work on the Sublime which goes by his name, appear to have been exclusively of a critical and æsthetic description. He may therefore, said Plotinus, in the usual style of system-mongers, be a grammarian, a rhetorician, a critic — but he can be no philosopher. It is true, that he does not appear to have sworn allegiance to any of the sects of his day; or to have read Plato to any other purpose than to tranquillise his mind, and to instruct his reason.* We know little of his particular philosophical opinions; thus much only is certain: that he played a leading part in the affairs of the East; and in his career and writings manifested not only knowledge of antiquity, but an antique force and freedom of character. In a double sense, therefore, he was well named by Porphyry a friend of the old time (*φιλαρχαῖος*). Almost alone, in the period we are treating of, he seems to have devoted his studies not to the cause of a sect or system, but to the business and conduct of life.† Even Marcus Aurelius, though the ruler of an empire, was not free from the littlenesses and pedantries of the schools. His stoic self-contemplations almost justify the ridicule with which Lucian persecutes that sect, as well as the Cynics. The emperor amuses himself with common-place phrases and trite maxims, at moments when the most urgent duties claimed his attention; and when war might have acquainted him with other ideas of danger and death than those of a schoolman, philosophising in Rome or Athens about them, while sedulously keeping

* “ Longinum ignoret oportet, qui tali ingenio placuisse credat duram et contortam philosophorum, qui conciliari nollent, conciliationem, insanum allegorici sive secretioris sensus quærendi studium, mysticas disputationes de deo divinisque emanationibus et dæmonibus, quibus omnes illorum libri sunt referti, alia denique multa, hic non attingenda, quibus tum vera et sincera Platonis philosophia fædum in modum adulterabatur.” — *Ruhnkenius Dissertatio de Longino*.

† “ Sed quod corrupta jam per recentiores Platonicos philosophia serum erat, homines ad veteres doctrinarum fontes atque adeo ad sanam mentem revocare.” — *Ibid.*

out of their way. Petrarch, in his panegyric of Marcus-Aurelius, has rightly named him a wise man of the schools on the throne; and said of him, that he preferred the name of philosopher to that of emperor. In a whole volume of scattered maxims, comparatively few passages appear to have flowed directly from the writer's excellent heart and feelings. Amongst these are his reflections on gratitude:—"What would you have more," he says, "when you have done good to a human being? You have done something accordant with your nature: do you want a reward for it? That were as though the eye should seek requital for seeing—the foot for stepping. As those members, when they have performed what they were given for, have sufficiently fulfilled their purpose, so has man himself, who was destined by nature to do good to others, fulfilled his destination when he has done any thing good, or contributed to the common welfare; and can ask nothing more."*

Having traced the effects of the systems and the schools of the times, up to a ruler of the Roman world we conclude with the mention of those men who opposed themselves, as *Sceptics*, to the spirit which prevailed in their times. If these philosophers found few adherents, it was partly from the mystical and enthusiastic temper abroad, and partly because the Sceptics sought to undermine every ground of certainty and inward conviction. Scepticism, a systematic doubt of all conclusions and reasonings, first became the doctrine of a sect in the later times of Athenian glory; and one of the most eminent champions of that sect made his appearance in this last period of Roman dominion. Sextus, a physician of the third century (the date at which he flourished is not known with precision), systematised all that the earlier Sceptics had put forth, in his works †; and aimed to show that every affirma-

* Marc. Anton. *Eis éautov*, lib. ix. § 42.

† The works of Sextus are three books *Hypothyposcon Pyrrhonicarum*, and his books *contra Mathematicos*.

tion of the understanding admitted of being attacked with the same weapons which were employed to defend it. A system of philosophical doubt, like that put forth by Sextus, is a fresh characteristic of times when the human mind disdains what is natural, to hunt after extremes and excitements. In all such times the books of Sextus are put in requisition. The renowned sceptic of modern times, Bayle, has made no inconsiderable use of them.

The *poetry* of these times is wholly beneath criticism. The choice of such subjects as *fishing, hunting, and bird-catching*, which exercised the muse of Oppian, Dionysius, Characenus, and others, is evidence enough that their respective performances could claim no eminence as works of poetry. A new species of literature, however, rose on the ruins of poetry; and has received further development from modern nations. This was the *Romance*, which had been previously unknown to antiquity, unless the *Cyropædia* should be called a political romance, though lacking the main character of romance, namely, that a love-story should form the *nodus*, the anticipated solution of which keeps the reader's mind in suspense. A certain sort of tales, it may indeed be conjectured, under the designation of Milesian fables, were at an early period diffused among the Greek people; with which, it is probable, the narrators entertained the assembled multitude much in the same way as the lazy auditory of eastern coffee-houses are at the present day amused by the recital of tales. It was, however, in the times we are treating of that *historiettes* of this description were first numbered amongst works of literature.

The romance, strictly so called, which turns on the progress of a love-story, appears to have had a contemporaneous origin with the slippery and comic description of narrative introduced, as we have seen, in the East and West, by Lucian and Apuleius. The history of Rhodane and Sinonis, one of the earliest Greek romances of which fragments have been handed down

to us, dates from the middle of the second century. A deluge of romances has come down from the third and fourth centuries ; which are partly preserved in libraries to this day in MSS. Of these, amongst the best known, are, the Loves of Clitophon and Leucippe, of Achilles Tatius ; the Bishop Heliodorus's *Æthiopica* ; a love-story of Theagenes and Chariclea ; the Pastorals, and Chloe and Daphnis, of Longus ; and finally, the romance of Chariton.

BOOK VII.

CHAP. I.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF CLAUDIUS TO THE FOUNDING OF
CONSTANTINOPLE.

A. D. 268. A NEW and better era for the Roman empire began with Claudius; the revolted were one by one crushed, and the generals formed in his school, who successively held the government after him, followed up the work he had begun. The barbarians subjugated, the unity of the governing power, which had wholly disappeared, was restored. That Gallienus, before his death, had named Claudius for his successor, though it was generally given out, is in the highest degree improbable. The first achievement of Claudius, as emperor, was to save Italy itself from the inroads of the Alemanni, whose leagued tribes had penetrated farther and farther southwards, till numerous bands of them made their appearance in the very neighbourhood of Verona, where Claudius advanced to their encounter, and routed them. After the conquest of the Alemanni, the new emperor proceeded to Rome, where, however, he spent only one winter; as the fresh and dangerous inroads of the Goths, and other tribes in league with them, soon called him away to Thrace. The Goths and their related tribes of Peucini, Gruthungi, Ostrogoths, Juthungi, Heruli, had annually repeated their incursions by land and by water, after sacking Athens and Ephesus. The whole mass of nations, whose settlements extended from the Don to the Dnieper and Pruth, set themselves in motion. One division of

them put to sea in a large fleet of war canoes, and rowed past Byzantium, through the Dardanelles, into the Ægean sea; another invaded from the side of the Danube the Roman provinces of Pannonia, Mœsia, and Illyria. All the sea-coasts from the *embouchures* of the Danube to Crete and Cyprus were devastated; the towns and fortified places alone resisted the barbarians, who, at many places of which they had formerly made themselves masters with great ease, as, for example, Cyzicus and Athens, suffered great losses. The provinces which were most exposed to their inroads, were indebted to the emperor's regulations, and to the activity of his generals, especially Aurelian, not only for a momentary rescue from the Gothic power, but for a lasting and material check to it. These advantages were, unfortunately, all but outweighed by the distribution of the great mass of the vanquished throughout the Roman provinces, and the incorporation into the Roman armies of whole herds of barbarians, with their leaders.

In the meanwhile, however, the barbarians were not only worsted in the field, but suffered from famine, and lost heart, being repulsed almost everywhere from the towns. At last, they made the effort, with their whole land and sea force, to reduce Cassandra and Thessalonica. On this intelligence, the emperor took the field against them in person, and gave them battle in Upper Mœsia, near Naissus. The issue of the engagement was long doubtful; but at length was decided in favour of Rome. In this engagement very great numbers of the Goths and other barbarians were slain; still greater numbers were made prisoners after the action; the rest shut up in the fastnesses of the Hæmus. These latter defended themselves desperately, and inflicted great losses on the Roman forces, till they were swept off by famine and diseases. The losses of the Goths and their allies would, however, appear to be very much exaggerated by the histories and official reports extant; since, immediately after Claudius's death, they

reappear in such imposing force, that Aurelian, after, according to the Roman historians, having obtained over them new and important successes, thought it the wisest course to grant them the whole farther province of Dacia, and other advantageous conditions. For the next fifty years we hear little of the Goths; and, when they do invade the Roman provinces, they are almost always repulsed with loss. The same infectious disease which had thinned their ranks, also carried off Claudius; the army chose Aurelian to succeed him, whom Claudius himself is said to have destined for his successor. When intelligence of the death of Claudius first reached Rome, that emperor's brother assumed the imperial title; but, on hearing of Aurelian's appointment, slew himself. The newly-elected emperor hastened from Mœsia to the capital; but had scarcely reached it, when the inroads of the Marcomanni called him to Aquileia. He repulsed the barbarians, pursued them into their own territory, and had penetrated far into Pannonia, when he learned, that the Alemanni, whom Claudius had brought to terms, had made a fresh irruption through Rhætia into Italy.

A. D.
270.

This new war of Aurelian with the Marcomanni, Alemanni, and the nations who were leagued, or made their inroads simultaneously, with them (amongst which the Vandals made their appearance), was of a nature no less formidable than his struggle with the Goths. His arms were, for the moment, successful; but, in the treaty which he closed with the Vandals, as in almost every peace which was made with the barbarians, large numbers of them (in this instance two thousand horse) were taken into the Roman service. An army, such as that of Rome had now become, composed of barbarians of all nations, habituated to rapine and massacre, could be kept in discipline only by inflictions of corresponding barbarity. Terror alone could re-establish the authority of the government, which had sunk lower and lower through a long series of years, and, in the end, had

disappeared altogether. The fortification of the city itself was wisely undertaken; for, since the passes of the Alps had failed to keep out the barbarian torrent, the barrier of the Apennines could no longer be deemed sufficient. The enormous size of the city required an immense circuit of walls, the building of which occupied the whole reign of Aurelian, and was not finished till under that of Probus.

Though the barbarians were about this time for the most part driven out of the empire, the undivided authority of the government was not yet restored; as Zenobia held independent sway in the East, and Tetricus assumed the title of emperor in Gaul. Since the death of her husband and eldest son Zenobia had assumed, and administered with masculine firmness, the government of that part of the Roman empire which had owned the authority of the former, in the name of her remaining sons, Herennianus and Timolaus. Her beauty, her cultivation of mind, but, especially, that quality so rare, (in females in eastern reigns, almost miraculous,)—her purity of soul and of life; her insight into affairs of state, and proficiency in Grecian accomplishments, distinguished her no less than the masculine bent of her occupations, her military exercises, love of the chase, and male eloquence. Wearing the diadem of eastern kings, she begirt her throne with eastern state and splendour. Her dress was half Greek, half oriental; and in public she always wore a helmet. Her banquets were ordered after the Roman manner. While she won the Romans, and all of Roman habits, by her frank and affable converse, on the other hand, she did not scruple to make herself agreeable to the Armenians and Persians, who were more intemperate in the use of wine than other orientals, by participating in their carouses. She was well versed in the languages of the East, Greece, and Egypt; in Latin, which her sons commonly spoke, she was less fluent. She knew admirably how to combine despotic rigour with mildness and serenity, liberality

with prudent economy. During the reign of Gallienus, Zenobia had more and more extended her sway, which not only included the whole of Syria, but the greater part of Asia Minor. Under Claudius she further sought to obtain possession of Egypt, and succeeded so far as to garrison Alexandria with Palmyrene troops.

Such was the posture of affairs immediately after the death of Claudius, and the termination of Aurelian's wars with the Goths and Alemanni. Zenobia was in possession of Alexandria, and on the point of reducing under her dominion Bithynia, and the rest of Asia Minor. Aurelian anticipated her projects. His march eastwards led him through Mœsia, and brought him in collision with the Goths, who reappeared on the right bank of the Danube, and whom he defeated in his passage, and deterred from farther incursions by the fall of one of their most distinguished leaders. In Bithynia, which had not yet submitted to Zenobia, the Romans were received as saviours; in Galatia, on the other hand, they met with resistance; the inhabitants of Anugra, however, opened its gates to them; and Thyatira was betrayed to their forces by one of its richest and most powerful citizens. Zenobia had collected her whole force in Antioch; but could the less confide in the Syrians, as Aurelian offered pardon to all who would desert from her; and a part of her army was already routed. Aurelian gained possession of Antioch after one action; and Zenobia rallied her main army, which consisted for the most part in cavalry, in the neighbourhood of Emesa. Here a decisive battle took place, the issue of which was long doubtful; and in which Zenobia's cavalry already were in a manner victors, when, only by a sudden intervention of Divine power, as Aurelian's panegyrist acknowledges, the Roman horse were rallied again by the steadiness of the infantry. After the loss of this battle, Zenobia fell back on her capital, whither she was instantly pursued by Aurelian. Smaller and less strongly fortified towns than Palmyra had set at defi-

ance the arms of Trajan, and the whole power of the empire, because they were surrounded by the desert; and Zenobia had reason to hope for assistance from the Persians, and the other nations bordering on her territory. The Persians, however, seem to have given her no solid assistance; and the famine which was soon felt in the city extinguished all hope of defending it. Zenobia attempted to fly to Persia, and had reached the Euphrates, when she was caught by the pursuing enemy, and brought back to the Roman camp. Their queen having been thus taken prisoner, the citizens of Palmyra accepted the emperor's terms of grace for themselves, opened their gates, and delivered up to his vengeance Zenobia's councillors, ministers, and generals. Aurelian found in the city, and its temples, immense treasures, which he carried off with him to Rome. In other respects he acted with forbearance towards Palmyra, as he had previously done towards Antioch and Emesa. Zenobia was brought to Rome to grace his triumph; her confidential servants, amongst them the celebrated Longinus, her prime minister, felt Aurelian's utmost rigour. Porphyry, Zosimus, and others, extol Longinus's firmness in death. On Zenobia's ultimate fate rests a certain degree of obscurity. The commonly received account is, that she lived many years in Italy, in honoured privacy. The account of Zosimus alone differs from the other authorities. According to his narrative, Zenobia died on her passage to Rome.

Aurelian's presence was next required by the state of the European provinces; especially of Gaul, where Tetricus still kept possession. He therefore hastened his return to Europe, leaving only a small garrison in Palmyra; but soon received intelligence of a new revolt of the Palmyrenes, and the slaughter of the troops he had left there. These tidings exasperated Aurelian to the uttermost: he instantly returned to Palmyra; retook the town at the first attack, and wreaked his rage on the people and the buildings with

unheard-of barbarity. A general massacre took place, without distinction of age or sex; and even the vast Temple of the Sun, which ranked among sacred edifices second alone to those of Egypt, was destroyed by the soldiers of Aurelian. The emperor gave orders, indeed, afterwards, to restore the building; but the times were more propitious to destruction than re-edification.

The Egyptians had also revolted, and had placed at their head a certain M. Firmius; had made use of his boundless wealth, partly acquired by commerce, for the promotion of their independence; and had taken under protection, and enrolled in their armies, all the refugees from Palmyra. They imagined Aurelian in the heart of Mesopotamia; when, all at once, to their amazement, he appeared in Egypt. The subjection of that land was of the more importance, as the new usurper had intercepted the usual export of grain to Rome. On quelling the insurrection, Aurelian wrote to the Roman people, in a manner almost comic, to announce his victory. He addressed his discourse to the common people, of whom he professed himself the friend, as he always aimed to attach to himself the populace and the soldiery. First, he promised bread; then introduced several other topics; and concluded by exhorting them to amuse themselves with the public games, especially those of the circus. Thus the prince of the world-ruling people makes it a theme of congratulation, that two wretched wants, *panis et circenses*, engrossed their entire thoughts. After Aurelian's return to the West, the Gallic revolt appears to have caused so little farther trouble, that the period or the manner of the fall of Tetricus has been handed down by no distinct record. A revolt in the capital itself, which was occasioned by the debasement of the currency, and the frauds of certain principal superintendents of the mint, makes a more conspicuous figure in the events of the latter part of his reign, and was not suppressed without great bloodshed. Thus much may be gathered from

the obscure accounts given by the miserable writers of these times ; but how 7000 of Aurelian's troops could have been sacrificed, as they state, in an affair like this, they leave altogether unexplained. Adored by the army and the populace, Aurelian was hated and feared, for his merciless severities, by the higher orders and functionaries. It may serve, however, for his excuse, that the condition of the empire was such, that, without the most extreme measures, it could not have been held together. Aurelian was greatest at the head of his army. He had scarcely solemnised his triumph over the enemies already conquered, when he meditated a new expedition into the East, to make war on the Persians. The emperor had arrived at Byzantium, and was on the point of crossing over with his army to Asia, when he discovered certain frauds to have been committed by his private secretary, and threatened to chastise him with his usual rigour. Forewarned of his doom, that functionary felt that he had nothing to risk, and, by forging the emperor's hand-writing, succeeded in making some of his most confidential servants believe that they were threatened, like him, with a cruel punishment, which they could only escape by the murder of the emperor. The conspirators, who were mostly men immediately round his person, had no difficulty in finding an opportunity, when the emperor was in the midst of them, and apart from the rest of his troops, to despatch him. The officers of high rank implicated in this deed, sought to escape, in some degree, the odium which followed it, by leaving the appointment of a new emperor to the senate ; and, when that body declined the election, strenuously insisting that the new prince should be named by the senate and people, not by the army. After the lapse of several months, the generals and the senate, who had by turns referred to each other the election of a new emperor, came to an understanding, and the senate gave a head to the empire.

A. D.
275.

Tacitus, an old and respectable senator, was unani-

mously elected emperor ; and it was made known, by congratulatory missions from the senate to the inhabitants of the municipalities throughout the empire, that the senate had recovered its rights, — the administration of the empire, and the choice of the emperor. Their triumph was of brief duration. Tacitus offended the troops he had collected together in the East ; and, six months after his accession, was despatched, in all probability much in the same way as Aurelian in Asia Minor, while intent upon repelling the incursions of the Goths and Alani. His brother, and prefect of the guards, Florianus, was acknowledged as emperor by the senate and by all the European provinces ; but as the army was better acquainted with Probus, who was proclaimed in Syria, Egypt, and Palestine, Florianus was forced in two months to desist from his pretensions, and Probus remained sole emperor.

A. D.
276.

A military chief was needed more than ever ; for Asia Minor had not yet been wholly cleared of the Goths and Alani ; and in Gaul the Franks, Burgundians, Vandals, and Lygians, had sacked sixty or seventy towns, and overrun the whole province. The great object of Probus was to restore an efficient discipline, and for this he held all means justifiable. The difficulty of the task may be estimated from the revolts of Saturninus, Bonosus, Proculus, with whom he had to engage in new struggles, after brilliant victories over the barbarians in every part of the empire. To enumerate the campaigns of Probus, and follow his martial career in detail, would require a more extended space, and more ample materials ; it may suffice to trace the leading aims and results of his undertakings, and the general condition of the empire shortly before his death.

Among the tribes of Germany, properly so called, which were united by ties of common origin and primitive modes of government, and were designated therefore by historians by a common name, the most remarkable were the Burgundians, Alemanni, Vandals,

and Franks. The last named of these tribes had made their way, by degrees, into the swamps and forests of the Netherlands ; while the Alemanni and Burgundians had obtained possession of Switzerland, and, from that point, of many towns of Gaul.

It is certain that Probus cleared the latter province of the barbarians, and that, to check the farther inroads of the Alemanni, he built a fleet of small vessels on the Rhine, and harassed the Vandals and Burgundians. He thereby, however, exasperated rather than subdued those tribes. According to Vopiscus, he himself declared that, without penetrating deep into the interior of Germany, and reducing the whole country to a province, all the triumphs he had won were barren.

From Gaul Probus marched to Asia Minor, through the territories bordering on the Danube ; checked the predatory exploits of the Isaurians and their neighbouring tribes ; showed himself in the East, and closed a treaty of peace with the Persians ; while his generals were waging war successfully with the semi-barbarous African tribes on the shores of the Red Sea.

After his return from the East, and the solemnities of a splendid triumph, Probus turned his attention to the wounds which the empire had undergone from the long reign of confusion and constant recurrence of barbarian inroads. He sought, by all means, to encourage cultivation and commerce, and to plant a new population in the provinces which had been laid desolate. Unfortunately, with these views, and doubtless with the best intentions, he introduced into the heart of the empire thousands of barbarians. To repeople the wasted regions of Gaul, the prisoners made in war, or any other barbarians who desired a quiet settlement, were partly made use of in Gaul, as serfs to cultivate the soil, partly settled on allotments of land ; and the cattle, which had been taken from the Germans on the other side of the Rhine, was bestowed amongst the occupiers in the Roman province. Thus attacks upon that province were rendered easy to the malcontents

amongst the new settlers, and the tribes robbed of their cattle were provoked to reprisals.

The discontent of the armies, which proved fatal to the emperor, manifested itself on the most opposite points of the empire. In the East, Saturninus had been forced by his troops to assume the purple; in Gaul and on the Rhine, revolts were excited by Bonosus and Proculus. Disturbances also arose in Britain and Spain, of which we have but faint traces, no circumstantial accounts of them being extant. These intestine feuds having been quelled, Probus turned, with redoubled zeal, to his project of reducing the armies; or employing them, at least, so long as their numbers should be kept up, in times of peace, on works of public utility. He was, however, resolved to carry through in a moment what was only to be done by slow degrees. At the very time when a war had broken out with the Persians, Probus imposed laborious public works upon the troops, whom he had brought together on the Danube, in order to lead them against the enemy. The neighbourhood of Sirmium, the birth-place of Probus, had at a former period been enriched by the labours of the legionaries with vineyards, which, up to the sixteenth century, were considered to afford the best wine in all the Hungarian territories. Probus ordered canals to be dug, marshes drained, and other works executed, to render the spot healthier and fitter for cultivation; and caused a tower to be erected, from which he could overlook the whole surrounding country and the progress of the labourers. The army was in the highest degree discontented with their forced labours; the more so, as they had recently vanquished the Quadi and the Sarmatians, and now had to look forward to a new service against the Persians. The soldiers complained of being kept, like criminals, with inexorable severity, to public works; and, when Probus himself appeared amongst the labourers, and urged them to diligence, their ill-will broke out into open insurrection. They

there slew him, and immediately afterwards elected as his successor the prefect of the guards, Carus.

The recently vanquished Quadi and Sarmatians, so soon as the emperor's death was known, fell anew upon the territories of the empire; Illyria, Thrace, and Italy itself were threatened; and the German tribes made fresh inroads on Gaul. Carus sent his eldest son Carinus against them, and himself pursued the Persian expedition.

The new emperor had grown grey in service; he was one of those officers who had risen to distinction under Aurelian and Probus, and several of whom rose in succession to the sovereignty of the empire, which required their protection. His rigour and harshness were, however, an object of terror; and the vices of Carinus, of abhorrence. The latter became his father's colleague (Augustus) with unlimited powers; and upon him devolved the rule of the whole West, while his father remained in the East. The younger brother, Numerian, received the title of Cæsar, and accompanied his father on the Persian campaign.

Carus followed the route which had been taken before him, by the example of so many of his predecessors since Trajan, as far as Ctesiphon; but, marching from thence, perished in his tent during a storm of great violence — killed, as the prefect of his guard, Aper, affirmed, by lightning, — but more likely by less natural means. Aper, whose daughter was married to the young Cæsar, Numerian, assumed the sovereignty of the East, on the sudden death of the emperor. It appears, however, that he was not of the number of those generals who possessed any considerable influence in the army, and consequently could not keep possession of the empire after the death of his son-in-law Numerian, which was laid to his charge, and which he concealed for a suspicious length of time. The army would not transfer to him their allegiance; and chose for emperor Diocletian, the military comrade, and most distinguished officer, of Carus.

A. D.
283.

The first imperial acts of Diocletian were to condemn the prefect Aper to death, as the murderer of Numerian, without investigation or evidence; and to execute the sentence with his own hand in the face of the army. However, Carinus, who marched to confront Diocletian from the West, was found a more formidable enemy. The struggle betwixt these two competitors for empire lasted more than seven months; and the last and decisive action, near Minegus, on the Danube, is affirmed by Aurelius Victor to have turned in Carinus's favour, who was slain by one of his own men. Upon the death of his rival, both armies recognised Diocletian as emperor.

A. D.
284.

CHAP. II.

DIOCLETIAN, TO THE FOUNDING OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

THE narrative of the particular events of Diocletian's government has come very imperfectly down to us ; and the resentment of the Christians on account of his persecutions, has not a little contributed to cast odium on his memory. From the dates of his laws, however, from occasional regulations which he issued at particular places, from chance-*notices* of his place of abode in this or in that year, it appears that he showed himself sometimes in one place, sometimes in another ; sometimes in the West, sometimes in the East ; sometimes on the frontier, sometimes in the interior ; as his presence in one or the other place appeared more or less necessary. Maximian, whom Diocletian adopted, first as a deputy in the West, under the title of Cæsar, and then, as a colleague in the empire, under that of Augustus, was, like Diocletian himself, a good general and stout soldier, but otherwise destitute of all cultivation. He felt Diocletian's superiority, and allowed himself entirely to be guided by him : the effects of divided government, therefore, were not at first felt.

The state of the empire was critical enough, without that aggravation. The incursions of the Saxons and Franks into Belgium ; the advances of the Marcomanni on Suabia ; the disturbances in the East, where a part of Egypt, joined with the neighbouring regions of the former Cyrenaic territory, was in open insurrection ; all these demonstrations appeared of so dangerous a nature, that Diocletian, who exclusively followed the promptings of his own genius, and held the feeble senate worthy of no consideration, resolved to remodel the whole internal arrangement of the Roman empire. He aimed at simplifying every branch of administration,

promoting despatch in the execution of all requisite measures, and stopping a fertile source of insurrection and disturbance, by rendering divisible the imperial power and dignity. But, as all his new arrangements were at variance with the laws of the empire, no less than with the prejudices of all classes, and rested altogether on the personal relations of the men whom he chose for Cæsars with himself, it could not by possibility be permanent.

The immediate occasion of the partition of the empire amongst several rulers seems to have been accidental. It was partly, indeed, owing to the attacks, more and more formidable, of the various German tribes on the Rhine and the Danube; who, however often they were repulsed, always reappeared. The Franks, the Saxons, perhaps, also, the Frisians, had about this time learned of the Romans to build larger vessels, made their appearance on the seas, ravaged the Gallic and British coasts, and made an inroad on Belgium by land. To check their devastations, Maximian equipped a fleet, the command of which he gave to an experienced seaman of low origin, Carnusius, a native of the Netherlands, with the charge to keep a guard on the coast, and intercept the vessels of the barbarians in the channel. It seems Carnusius protected, indeed, the regions which were entrusted to his immediate superintendence, but generally looked on while the barbarians were plundering other districts in the neighbourhood, in order to deprive them of their booty on their return, wherewith to enrich himself and his troops, and make himself friends in Britain.

This policy was so far successful, that when Maximian attempted to bring him to account, he found a friendly reception in Britain, and was proclaimed independent emperor by the Roman legion stationed there. The whole fleet, which was collected in the port of Boulogne, followed him, and he found it easy to gather round him hordes of barbarians. Maximian fitted out a fleet, with which he made demonstrations of crossing

into Britain, and depriving Carnusius of that island. This undertaking, however, utterly failed: Maximian himself confessed that at sea he was no match for his antagonist, and came to pacific terms with him. Carnusius promised to guard the coasts as before; retaining, on the other hand, the title he had assumed, and the dominion of Britain, with a port on the continent. The Britons rejoiced in this administration. Their island was then in a flourishing condition, stocked with cattle, studded with towns; Carnusius kept off the barbarians who threatened the coast, and drove the Highland Scots back to their fastnesses. Carnusius remained in undisturbed possession of Britain, till he misplaced his confidence in a traitor Alectus, or Allectus, whom he entrusted with the command of the army, and the powers of civil administration, and gave him thereby an opportunity, through the murder of his benefactor, to usurp the government and the title of Augustus.

While in Britain, Alectus carried on the plundering government of Carnusius: Egypt, too, was in a state of revolt; and even the wretched Nomads of the Nubian deserts not only made inroads on the Roman province of Nubia, but penetrated frequently as far as Central Egypt. In Lower Egypt Achilleus, who had started as a pretender there, maintained his footing more than six years. The insurrections and incursions of the African tribes called Maximian into Mauritania, while Constantius Chlorus was conquering Alectus in Britain; and the war was hardly finished in the latter country when a new and very perilous conflict with the barbarians awaited Constantius, in the regions of Troyes and Langres; a conflict in which he carried off the victory only by extraordinary efforts, and after a defeat.

It was no wonder that the barbarians penetrated so easily and so rapidly across the Rhine, and even to the heart of France, since Maximian, like several of his predecessors, had peopled the fertile regions on the Sambre, Maes, and Moselle, with barbarians, to fill the vacant place of the old inhabitants. Constantius

Chlorus, also, knew no better method of repeopling the desolated land, after his victories there, than by introducing fresh barbarian colonists.

These few traits from the history of the times show us sufficiently why Diocletian, however little he might be inclined to sacrifice his supreme dominion, found it necessary, however, to appoint Cæsars, who should exercise independent powers on the frontiers. In the choice of the men with whom he shared out the empire he seems to have been particularly careful to select such on whose reverence and obedience he could reckon securely; and, in fact, neither his colleague Maximian, nor the two newly-elected Cæsars, Galerius and Constantius, opposed his will in any particular.

A. D.
292.

The union of this quadruple administration lasted twelve years. The choice of the two Cæsars had been made by Diocletian solely: Galerius was destined to protect from the barbarians the Danubian provinces in the East, Illyria, and Greece; Constantius was associated in the West to Maximian. Galerius was solemnly invested with the robes of his new dignity in the plain of Nicomedia, in the sight of the people, and amidst the loud applauses of the assemblage, on an eminence, where afterwards a column was raised, surmounted by a statue of Jupiter. Distinct provinces were assigned to each of the four rulers, and definite portions marked out to them for defence. This did not, however, prevent the one from exercising the attributes of sovereignty in the provinces of the other, or assuming the command of the armies. The ordinances of all four were valid alike through all the provinces — all the four emperors were viewed as one, till Diocletian abdicated the government. Four courts, four imperial armies, must have oppressed the empire; the expeditions and marches of the emperors were increased fourfold: besides which, Diocletian introduced the pompous ceremonial of the East; and Italy suffered more from the tax of furnishing recruits than any other part of the empire.

Amongst these rulers three were equally brave, but harsh and merciless men. Constantius alone was distinguished by birth, education, and mental culture. The latter had special charge to reunite Britain with the empire. Allectus, who ruled that island after the murder of Carnusius, confiding in the Roman troops who served under him as little as in the natives of the country, advanced with his picked troops of barbarians to meet the prefect Asclepiodotus, who had seized an opportunity to cross the channel from Boulogne, with one division of the fleet of Constantius, while the emperor himself lay with the other at the mouth of the Seine. Allectus was defeated, and fell. Constantius, on his landing, found the enemy already conquered, and a squadron of his fleet, which had been separated from the rest by accident, and sailed up the Thames, reached London exactly at the moment when the dispersed rabble, of which Allectus's army had been formed, were about to sack that opulent city. It was, however, saved from the hands of the barbarians, and numbers of the Frisians, Franks, and Saxons, who had constituted the main strength of the army of Carnusius, and after him of Allectus, on this occasion met their fate. The clemency of Constantius, after the victory, has been highly eulogised. However, many British artists and artisans of eminent skill must have been carried off, as special mention is made of such in the rebuilding of the edifices destroyed by the ravage of war in and about Autun.

About the time that Britain was reunited to the empire, Diocletian commenced hostilities with Egypt; and, not long afterwards, Maximian crossed over to Africa, where he waged war with the rebels and the African populations. Of the latter undertaking we know little; and we must also gather the history of Diocletian's expedition to Egypt from the scanty notices of Eutropius, and the incidental hints of Procopius. From these accounts we find, that Achilleus held out in Alexandria for eight months; that that city, and

several other densely populous places in Egypt, suffered much from the military rigours of the emperor, who knew no other course for subduing the obstinacy and restless disposition of the Egyptians. For the rest, he made the wisest regulations, which afterwards were kept up even by the Christian emperors, to whom Diocletian always was an object of abhorrence. For this purpose he traversed the whole country, and sacrificed Nubia, in order to be able the better to protect Egypt against the inroads of the miserable hordes of the Blemmyes, from whom it had suffered during more than a century. He fortified the valley of the Nile where it is narrowest, and protected, by walls and garrisons, the island there formed by the Nile; but neither the fortifications nor the garrison, nor the friendships formed with the Nubian tribes, and sealed with solemn sacrifices, could permanently keep off the predatory nomads.

The war commenced with the Persians, for the possession of the throne of Armenia, was terminated in a manner the most honourable to the Roman empire. Armenia was regarded, both by Romans and Persians, as a dependency of their own, to the sovereignty of which they were wont to raise their friends or vassals. The possession of the Armenian throne, and the contests which arose among the pretenders to it, betwixt each other, and with their subjects, had given occasion, since Nero's time, to all the wars of the Romans and Persians. In the times which we are treating of, the Persians had made good their pretensions; and had driven Tiridates, who put forth claims to the throne of Armenia, and was favoured by the Romans, out of the country. Tiridates, however, backed by Diocletian, was established on the throne of Armenia, while Persia was distracted with intestine warfare. He now took Turkish and other auxiliary bands into his service, and maintained his footing so long as the Persian empire was divided between several pretenders to the throne; but was again expelled so soon as Narseus, in the year 294,

united the whole Persian empire under his dominion. Diocletian held it dishonourable to give up the dependant of Rome, and summoned Galerius from the Danube to the Euphrates, whither he himself resolved to lead the army of Egypt. Galerius, however, did not wait for him ; but, before Diocletian had put his army in motion from Egypt to join him, attacked the Persians with his army, which was particularly weak in cavalry, precisely on the side where they were strongest. Instead of pushing across the mountains, through Armenia, Galerius advanced against the Persians, who had entered Mesopotamia with their whole national force, by the route which Crassus in former times had followed to his destruction, was completely hemmed in by them betwixt Callinicum and Carrha, and narrowly escaped the fate which Crassus and his army had experienced on nearly the same spot. The sacrifice and dispersion of his army by this precipitate haste is said to have procured Galerius a very unfavourable reception from Diocletian, who had advanced with his whole force to check the progress of the Persians, while Galerius assembled a new army in the Danube-provinces, in which in particular he enrolled strong bands of Goths. With this new army he marched across the Armenian mountains into Persia, while Diocletian stationed himself with a large force on the Euphrates. The Persians marched with a picked army to meet Galerius ; but the ground favoured the Roman infantry rather than the Persian cavalry ; and Galerius, to revenge the disgraceful reverse which he had recently suffered, went in person as a spy into the Persian camp. Here he watched so well his opportunities, that immediately afterwards he surprised the enemy in their camp, dispersed their forces, plundered their treasures, possessed himself of the whole of the king's harem, and dangerously wounded his person.

The Persians now seemed disposed to accept any terms of peace ; and by the treaty which was closed immediately afterwards, they ceded the provinces which they had possessed on the other side of the Tigris, and

gave up all claim on Mesopotamia, which they never had consented to previously. Diocletian secured the newly acquired provinces, including Mesopotamia, with new fortifications, walls and trenches, mentioned by Ammianus Marcellinus with high panegyric.

In the very year (the nineteenth of the reign of Diocletian) in which the most judicious system of government was established in Syria, was also commenced that fearful persecution of the Christians, the severities of which might seem inconceivable on the part of so clear-sighted and so cautious a ruler, if it were not easy of explanation from that vigilant jealousy with which Diocletian guarded his supreme authority in the empire. Every symptom of disobedience, every attempt at revolt, he visited with inexorable rigour; so that often, in a momentary excess of rage, he issued edicts calculated to produce the most pernicious effects. The persecution of the Christians at first extended no farther than the soldiers of that persuasion who refused their attendance at heathen festivals, and exasperated the emperor by disturbing his sacrificial rites. It seems that, for the purpose of preventing what they looked upon as invocations and questionings of the devil, in the inspection of the entrails of the victims at the altar, they appeared on such occasions with the cross on their helmets, thereby irritating the priests, who awakened the emperor's anger against them. This appears from a passage of Eusebius, in which he complains bitterly of the hollowness and hypocrisy of the Christians of his own times; of their incredible corruptions, of their evil-doing and evil-speaking, of their feuds among themselves, of the contentions of their bishops, their struggles for pre-eminence and stiffness in opinions. He adds, that the persecution began with the soldiery, and that it was only through the forward zeal exhibited by the Christians themselves that it came to extend to their whole communion.

Diocletian went no farther at first than the exclusion of the Christians from the army, from his court, and

his immediate presence ; and persevering cabals were required to obtain his assent to harsher measures. These cabals took rise from Galerius, whose mother was a zealous believer in the juggleries and mysteries of the Phrygian priests. Incited by his mother, Galerius urged his colleague to measures of indiscriminate rigour against the Christian community. Diocletian long evaded compliance, and at length convoked a great council ; and, after its voice had been given for measures of rigour, farther took the opinions of heathen priests and soothsayers, who gave judgment, as may easily be believed, against the Christians. It was now first that he issued an edict, less, however, against the persons of the Christians, than against the exercise of their worship, and the recognition of their body as a lawful association. It was then ordained that the churches should be closed or pulled down ; that the crosses and images of Christ should no longer be tolerated ; and that Christians should not only be incapacitated from holding an office, but even from pursuing or defending their rights before the tribunals. This edict having, as usual, been fixed up in public in Nicomedia, where Diocletian and Galerius were sojourning, a man of high consideration among the Christians tore it down in broad daylight, threw the fragments on the ground, and called out to the bystanders that the emperors would do better to announce victories over the Goths and Sarmatians, than persecutions of the innocent Christians. This provoked Diocletian, who, as we have mentioned above, was inexorably strict in all that concerned the vindication of his imperial authority. Here then commenced a cruel persecution of the *persons* of the Christians : their churches were everywhere razed to the ground ; and, as a dreadful fire in the palace of the emperor, and a second were, not without plausible colour, ascribed to the revenge of the Christians, this increased the rage against them, not in the East only, but also in Africa and Italy. In the countries beyond the Alps, only the churches were destroyed or closed. The execution of the imperial

commands was intrusted to the soldiers, to the functionaries who were hostile to Christianity, and to the populace. Galerius exclusively enjoyed these cruelties, while Diocletian partook their blame.

A. D.
305. In the second year after the commencement of this persecution of the Christians, Diocletian and Maximian met in the capital of the empire, to celebrate, by a splendid triumph, the many victories each had won. They selected that particular year, in order that they might solemnise at the same time the second decennial period of Diocletian's reign. That emperor, so far as we know, had never been in Rome since his accession, not even when he came to Milan to hold a conference with Maximian. His colleague, also, had only been twice or thrice in the metropolis. Accordingly the Romans looked for something extraordinary, in the shape of public sports and donatives. They were, however, very much disappointed. Diocletian's frugality withheld him from incurring any needless expense; and he regarded with scorn those of his predecessors who had lavished gold to captivate the favour of the people. Accustomed to the reverential silence and the mute obedience of oriental courts, he found the freedoms taken with his person, and the censures indulged on his administration in Rome so intolerable, that he left that capital for Ravenna in the most inclement weather. In this way he contracted an illness, which increased during the long and toilsome land-passage through Illyria to Nicomedia: he lay ill for a whole year so seriously, that intelligence of his death was repeatedly circulated. Even after his recovery, traces of mental infirmity from time to time showed themselves, which rendered it impossible for him longer to administer the public affairs. Even during his illness Diocletian had extorted a promise from Maximian that he would also resign the imperial power; and both emperors abdicated the government at the same time (May, 305). The two Cæsars, Constantius and Galerius, were proclaimed supreme rulers, the one in Nicomedia, the other in Milan; and Galerius alone

decided, without taking counsel either of Constantius or Diocletian, the choice of the new Cæsars, Severus and Maximin, who were now intruded upon the empire. Diocletian and Maximian, in abdicating imperial power, retained for themselves large estates and revenues: the former took up his abode in his native province, Dalmatia, and reared enormous piles of building at Salona, near the modern Spalatro, the remains of which indicate the taste in art to have greatly decayed, no less than in literature. Maximian chose to reside in Lower Italy, but could not console himself for the loss of empire so easily as Diocletian.

The new Cæsars were only known to the soldiers, especially to the numerous barbarian hordes which Diocletian had enrolled in the Roman army, and whom they resembled in their faults and passions. Constantine alone, the son of Constantius,—whom Galerius had passed over on account of his leaning towards the Christians, notwithstanding that he possessed Diocletian's favour, and held a high command in the army,—was deserving of the throne by education, habits, and character. On the occasion of an expedition planned by Constantius to protect the peaceful Britons from the inroads of the highland marauders, Constantine begged and obtained leave to attend his father. Constantius fell sick in Britain, where he died; and he was no sooner dead, than Constantine was saluted by his army with the name of Augustus. This intelligence gave Galerius great annoyance, having intended, in the event of the death of Constantius, to have conferred that title on his old friend and brother in arms, Licinius, whom, for that reason only, he had not nominated as Cæsar. He had intended to pass over Constantine entirely, with whom, however, he now wished to avoid a rupture; and the latter was prudently content with the title of Cæsar, leaving Severus, as being of older standing, the first rank.

July,
306.

Shortly after this epoch, the situation of the whole empire was changed by a popular movement in its au-

cient capital ; and Constantine, without any agency of his own, and through the vices of his colleagues, became master of the empire.

In his new function of Cæsar and general, Severus was the mere tool of Galerius, who made use of him to execute his oppressive commands. Galerius was desirous to extend the capitation and taxation on property to those towns which had hitherto been free from these burthens, and to Rome in particular, to whose citizens, like Diocletian, he was never friendly. With this view he took a population-census, and made strict investigation of property ; proceedings which in the highest degree incensed the Romans. At the same time he ordered that the small number of troops which had hitherto been always kept up in the neighbourhood of the city, under the once important name of Prætorians, should be removed ; and thus appeared to grudge the Romans even the shadow of their former supremacy. The soldiers were enraged by the breaking up of their camp and loss of their privileges ; the people by their apprehension of new and oppressive imposts ; and Maxentius, the son of Maximian, an imbecile creature in mind and body, who had hitherto lived wholly retired from affairs on his estates near Rome, appeared alike to soldiers and citizens, as the son of a Cæsar, the fit man for their leader. He was accordingly proclaimed emperor, first by the troops, and then by the people.

A. D.
306. As all this happened in October, and before the end of the year Maximian had reassumed the purple in Rome, it may be surmised, with some probability, that the old man had got tired of retirement, and had more part than was known in the insurrection. The army had served under Maximian, and was thoroughly devoted to him ; Severus, on the other hand, had never been much distinguished in arms. Accordingly his whole army deserted to Maximian ; and after abdicating the title of Cæsar, in hopes of retaining at least his life, he was, nevertheless, put to death by his successor. Maximian then courted the alliance of Constantine ; gave him

in marriage his daughter Fausta, and conferred on him the title of Augustus, which Galerius had withheld from him. Maximian, however, wasted his pains on his new son-in-law, in endeavouring to rouse him up against Galerius, who was at times threatening the capital; and returning to Rome, he quarrelled with his own son, and was driven from Italy. He found, however, Constantine as little disposed to take his part against Maxentius as against Galerius, and formed the singular resolution of betaking himself next to the latter, who made use of his presence merely to assist (with the old Diocletian, who was coaxed and almost dragged from seclusion for that purpose) at the recognition and proclamation of Licinius as Augustus, it having been the long-cherished project of Galerius to elevate his old friend with all possible pomp to be his colleague.

A. D.
306.
Nov.

Galerius did not long survive the attainment of this object; and Maximian, after failing in his vain efforts to divert his son-in-law Constantine from the careful government of his province, to the furtherance of his schemes of superannuated ambition, equally failed in more senseless and criminal attempts to debauch his troops, and next to murder him. The dotard, after repeated forbearance, was at length put quietly out of the way.

310.

The number of Christians in all parts of the empire had by this time become very considerable: they were united among themselves in the closest manner; they maintained their hierarchy and synods, while the senate disappeared, with every relic of popular administration. The adherents of the old religion, although they were united enough in their hatred of Christianity and contempt of Christians, were separated by infinite varieties in their views and sentiments, and kept together by no internal or external hierarchical bond. Whoever, therefore, had in his favour the Christians in all parts of the empire, could not fail to acquire, sooner or later, as a ruler, the supremacy over his fellow rulers. Maxentius seems to have felt this; for he had no sooner become

master of Rome than he promised toleration to the Christians; but his despicable character, the arbitrary acts which in all things he permitted himself, his rigours towards the senate, his superstitious awe of the heathen oracles, and, indeed, his whole deportment towards the Christians, belied his milder edicts. Even Galerius, shortly before his death, repented him of the cruelties which he had long practised against the Christians; and issued an edict, in his own name, and in the names of his fellow sovereigns, in which he put a stop to the persecution of their communion. This edict was never acted upon in the eastern part of the empire.

Constantine alone seemed sincerely well disposed towards the Christians. He did not, indeed, discontinue the services of the heathen gods (even after he had become sovereign in Rome, and had made the cross the banner of the empire). Constantine alone, from the very commencement of his reign, showed regard for law and government, while all his colleagues rioted in the exercise of military power and despotic caprice. He, too, alone appeared content with his portion in the empire: all the others sought to extend their dominion at the expense of their colleagues. Galerius was scarce dead, when a contest arose betwixt Licinius and Maximian about the division of the provinces; and the latter took possession of Nicomedia as his capital, and of the Asiatic provinces, as far as the Propontis. A treaty was, with difficulty, at length concluded between them; by virtue of which the Bosphorus was fixed as the boundary line of their states.

Maxentius is described by friends and enemies, Christians and heathens, as a cowardly tyrant, to whom none were attached but his guards and a select band of troops, chiefly barbarians, whom he enriched with the plunder of citizens of all orders, even the senatorial. In reliance on the soldiery and several able officers, he resolved to act on the offensive, even against Constantine. That his strength or resources could not for a moment stand compared with those of his antagonist,

and that to seek as he did a quarrel was madness, is apparent on a single glance at the life of both leaders. Maxentius had never even stood at the head of an army; he had ever lived for the gratification of his lusts in lazy tranquillity. The life of Constantine had been spent in incessant effort and self-discipline. He had served with honour under Diocletian; he had accompanied his father on an expedition to Britain; he had long commanded on the Rhine; and had struck terror into the Frankish population and their leaders. The petty chiefs of these tribes were despatched by his orders, whenever taken; and the banks of the Rhine and the Moselle had rest. He afterwards crossed the Rhine, marched far into Westphalia, and, as his panegyrist exultingly announces, carried off or killed all the cattle that he met with, burned down all the houses and villages, and gave up to wild beasts every grown person who fell into his hands, and who was not fit to use as a soldier.

Maxentius had assembled an immense army around the capital, where he quietly awaited the approach of Constantine, making no attempt even to prevent his passage over the Po, or to guard the passes of the Apennines. Even after thus giving up to him the keys of Italy, he had only to keep the Tiber betwixt himself and his antagonist, to throw the latter into the utmost embarrassment. Constantine, in the course of his march to Rome, had been unsuccessful in several engagements; to have remained longer before the city must therefore have been his destruction. Maxentius consequently gave up the whole advantage of his position by marching out to meet him at the distance of some leagues from Rome, and placing his army betwixt that of the enemy and the Tiber. In the decisive moment Constantine availed himself of the enthusiasm of the Christians in his own army, and that of the enemy, by elevating the sign of the cross on the standard of the empire. It was spread abroad that the God of the Christians had promised him, in a wondrous ap-

partition, to bestow the victory on his army under the sign of the cross. Accordingly, the day before the decisive action, that sign appeared, with the name of the divine founder of Christianity, on the imperial standard, afterwards known by the name of Labarum ; and Constantine publicly gave out that he had seen the cross in the heavens, and that his victory was due to a miracle. Maxentius's new legions took flight at the very commencement of the action ; the veterans, on the other hand, fought stoutly and obstinately, till the cavalry was broken, and Maxentius himself took flight. In the hurry and pressure of the flight, he fell into the Tiber, where his corpse was found the next day, and his head cut off, as an ornament to the triumphal entrance of Constantine ; who also caused to be put to death the sons and some of the other relations of his vanquished antagonist. The Prætorians and legions of Maxentius were incorporated with Constantine's other forces ; and the remaining veteran troops disarmed, and not taken again into service till afterwards, and sent to the Rhine.

Since his victory over Maxentius, Constantine's character seems to have altered ; and his conduct often stands in contradiction with the principles which he publicly professed. He became a Christian ; all things were permitted or pardoned him by the clergy ; and the despicable flattery of the Roman senate could not but lead him to notions of exclusive supremacy. The senate, which, after Trajan's example, Constantine reinforced with an accession of provincial members ; which, however, had long ceased to be a governing body, and was never even consulted in affairs of government, conferred on Constantine, without his right to the honour being very apparent, precedence over Licinius and Maximin. Constantine remained only two months in Rome, withdrew from the city all the troops, even to the municipal guard ; but contrived to flatter the vanity of the Romans, who built a triumphal arch to his honour in haste, the remains of which would otherh

wise give us a very deplorable idea of the condition of the arts in these times. He showed toleration to the Christians, and favour to their clergy; made the sign of the cross the imperial standard, without, however, abandoning the title and the office of high priest of the old religion, which had previously been conferred upon him, or absenting himself from its sacrificial rites. Even after he had openly made profession of Christianity, and, in his zeal for the new faith, erected churches and destroyed temples, he deferred receiving the sacrament of baptism till his death-bed; that he might thus, according to the doctrine taught him by his court clergy, pass into another life cleansed of all sin.

Immediately after the capture of Rome, where Constantine was as little as Diocletian had been in the habit of residing any long time from choice, the German nations renewed their inroads on Gaul; and Constantine was obliged to take the field against them. However, before he crossed the Alps, he solemnised the marriage of his sister with Licinius. The latter was at this moment threatened with an attack, between Heraclea and Adrianople, from Maximin. Licinius endeavoured to avoid the arbitrement of war, and offered advantageous conditions; but Maximin declined all his overtures, in the firm belief that the forces of his antagonist would desert to his side. The Christian writers represent a miracle to have happened in favour of Licinius on this occasion, almost greater than had taken place before for Constantine; for the latter was at least a believer; the former quite the reverse. An angel, they relate, appeared to Licinius in a dream, and taught him a prayer, which, on his awaking, he caused immediately to be copied, and distributed for the use of his troops. This prayer was offered up on the field; and, though no distinguished merit is perceptible to ordinary eyes in its form, its virtue is alleged to have secured the victory.

Maximin had counted so securely on victory, that he was neither in condition to defend the Bosphorus nor

the Hellespont, and designed to fly to Egypt, and throw the Nile betwixt himself and his enemy. But even on his route he despaired of the possibility of making any further stand, and took poison in Tarsus, which however did not work immediately, but caused a painful illness, of which he died, after protracted agonies. The Christian writers make an ignoble use of these circumstances. They describe with undisguised malignity the tortures of Maximin's disease, which may possibly be of their own invention; and they dwell with hypocritically-veiled, but evident, exultation on the zealous rigours exercised on the enemies of their faith by Licinius, in causing Maximin's wife to be thrown into the Orontes, and persecuting all his friends and relations.

Immediately after the conquest of the eastern provinces, Constantine fell out with his brother-in-law, who seemed to him to have grown too powerful. Constantine had raised Bassianus, whom he had married to another of his sisters, to the rank of Cæsar, with the view of giving Italy up to him. Licinius, however, made it clear to the latter that he was merely a tool in Constantine's hands, and persuaded him to resist his intentions. Bassianus's brother, Senecio, was the go-between in these cabals, and took flight to Licinius, when the project was discovered, and Bassianus brought to criminal justice. The refusal of Licinius to deliver up the fugitive, and other matters, served as a pretext for war, which it appeared had not been looked for so suddenly on either side, from the small amount of force which both brought into the field. Constantine came twice off victor; but with such serious losses that he found it expedient to accept terms which he had previously rejected with the utmost contempt.

In the interval between the first and last war with Licinius, we find Constantine now at one, now at the other frontier, everywhere keeping the barbarians within bounds; appearing also from time to time in Rome, and holding games and solemnities, but never remain-

ing long in that city: while Licinius, in his eastern dominions, which he retained by the late treaty, oppressed his subjects, persecuted the Christians, and amassed treasures by every possible method of extortion. Constantine, on his part, was incessantly active as legislator, as general, as promoter of the Christian religion, and, in a quiet way, as persecutor of the old state-religion and Judaism. In the years immediately preceding the new war with Licinius, Constantine mostly resided in the eastern part of his dominions. In these years, according to Eutropius, actual hostilities had broken out several times between the two generals, — *varia deinde inter eos bella; et pax reconciliata ruptaque est.*

The outbreaking of the last war with Licinius was connected in its causes with the wars of Constantine on the Danube. He had conquered the Sarmatians; he had routed the Goths; and had followed up the chase of their plundering hordes, whom he finally forced to capitulate, without caring whether he was leading his army over his own territory or over that of Licinius. This violation of his independence had exasperated Licinius; and the long disputes of the rival princes broke out afresh into open hostilities. This time it was evident that both parties had long looked forward to the contest, from the imposing force with which each took the field, as well as from the enormous treasures collected by Licinius for the purposes of this war, and, when Constantine got possession of them, lavished upon the clergy. Licinius had thought himself secure near Adrianople, covered by the Hebrus; but Constantine discovered a ford, deceived his antagonist by a skilful movement, and attacked him with advantage on the other side of the river. Licinius was defeated; but, having a greater naval force than Constantine, could he have kept the sea, might have held out for a long while in Byzantium, and disputed his antagonist's passage to Asia; but a violent south wind, which drove his ships aground, and aided the attack of the enemy's fleet, conducted by Crispus, the eldest son of Constantine,

annihilated all his hopes. The fleet was in part driven by the wind on shore and against the rocks; in part destroyed by the enemy. He was consequently compelled to abandon Byzantium; and the only course which now remained open to him was to prevent the enemy landing on the Asiatic coast. Even this attempt was fruitless. Constantine landed some ten leagues from Chrysopolis; and Licinius was once more compelled to try the chances of action. These (by miracle, as Eusebius will have it) went once more against him. Licinius, after the loss of the battle, fled to Nicomedia: his wife, however, received from her brother Constantine the promise that her husband should be left unharmed, on condition of renouncing the government. Licinius, trusting to this promise, gave himself up to the hands of the victor; and, together with Martianus, his principal officer, whom he had made Cæsar, was at first received ostensibly in a very friendly manner. However, they were both shortly afterwards transported to remote places, and put to death.

From henceforth it became too evident that Constantine was led widely astray in his views of his own character and duties towards others, by the hypocrite crew of flatterers about him. He pleased himself with the fancy of being the holiest and purest of men; his own will became a law to him, as he made his own family feel. He resolved to be the patron of a new state religion; to be lawgiver in the secular and spiritual polity; founder of a new metropolis, not inferior to the old; and author of a new division and order of the empire. He regarded every resistance to his will, as his theologians taught him, as nothing short of a revolt against God and his anointed; and, in chase of greatness and glory, neglected the necessary and useful. His conduct to his relations and connections resembles that of an oriental despot, and does his Christianity little honour. The eldest son of Constantine, Crispus, the stepson of his second wife Fausta, at an early age showed military talents of a high order; fought with advantage against

the barbarians on the Rhine; and won the decisive naval victory over the admiral of Licinius. His father's jealousy took from him the government of Gaul, which he had previously committed to him, retained him near his own person, and, in the midst of the festivities which celebrated the completion of the twentieth year of his reign, he caused the unfortunate youth to be imprisoned, and soon afterwards executed. Great obscurity hangs about the immediate cause of these rigours; but it is not very honourable to Constantine's share in the transaction, that the good bishop Eusebius, who wrote so much in praise of his patron's eminent services in the cause of Christianity, should have passed over this history in total silence. Whether Crispus played with his step-mother Fausta the part of Joseph with Potiphar's wife, and the latter enacted that of Phædra, as later writers, especially Zonaras, delight to affirm; or whether, as Zosimus relates, Constantine discovered an illicit connection betwixt his son and his wife, and first murdered his son, regarding him as the seducer, and then his wife, on discovering that she had in fact been so, it is now vain to endeavour to decide. The fact of the two executions is however unquestionable. It is also certain that Constantine's mother, Helena, was deeply grieved by the death of her grandson; and contributed accordingly to open her son's eyes to his wife's abandoned conduct; which could hardly be a difficult task. Fausta was suffocated in her bath, by the order of her husband, and a number of her friends and followers executed.

A. D.
326.

The most momentous public measure which Constantine undertook, and carried into effect in a very arbitrary, not to say violent manner, was the total partition of the empire by the foundation of a new capital. From thenceforward the West was abandoned to its destiny. Byzantine was new-christened by Constantine's name, and in eight years converted to a populous city by a population forced together from all quarters in the true style of oriental despotism. The new city was designed

330.

to be exclusively Christian ; and immense sums were spent, altogether uselessly to its trade and prosperity, in building churches and palaces, which was done in part so hastily, that few years had elapsed before the fall of many magnificent buildings. Works of art, however, it was resolved, should not be wanting ; and, as art itself had gone to decay, the monuments of antiquity were brought from all parts to set them up in streets and public places, as it was thought they ought not to be suffered within roofed buildings. Often, too, such works, to remove their heathenish appearance, were subjected to extraordinary mutilations and disfigurements. With similar despotic caprice, the senate and authorities of the new capital were placed on an equality of rank and importance with the senate and authorities of Rome ; in other words, the last relics of the old constitution were swept away.

CHAP. III.

ECCLESIASTICAL POLITY.

THE history of old Rome terminates with the triumph of a new creed, the foundation of a new capital, and the total revolution in religion and manners thus outwardly consummated under the long reign of Constantine.* The removal of the seat of government is a mere type of the decentralisation and division of empire, which again took place under Constantine's sons and successors. The Eternal City sunk into shade beneath an exotic growth of oriental despotism; and the old religion fled from sites foredoomed to Gothic invasion and pillage, to linger by the hearths of the peasantry — whence the name of *Pagans*.†

A fresh page of history begins from this period, on which the limits of our work forbid us to enter, and which has besides been preoccupied by an eminent writer.‡

* “Constantine survived that solemn festival (the thirtieth anniversary of his reign) about ten months; and at the mature age of sixty-four, after a short illness, he ended his memorable life at the palace of Agyrion, in the suburbs of Nicomedia, whither he had retired for the benefit of the air, and with the hope of recruiting his exhausted strength by the use of the warm baths. The excessive demonstrations of grief, or at least of mourning, surpassed whatever had been practised on any former occasion. Notwithstanding the claims of the senate and people of ancient Rome, the corpse of the deceased emperor, according to his request, was transported to the city which was destined to preserve the name and memory of its founder. The body of Constantine, adorned with the vain symbols of greatness, the purple and diadem, was deposited on a golden bed, in one of the apartments of the palace, which for that purpose had been splendidly furnished and illuminated. The forms of the court were strictly maintained. Every day, at the appointed hours, the principal officers of the state, the army, and the household, approaching the person of their sovereign, with bended knees and a composed countenance, offered their respectful homage as seriously as if he had been still alive. From motives of policy, this theatrical representation was for some time continued; nor could flattery neglect the opportunity of remarking, that Constantine alone, by the peculiar indulgence of heaven, had reigned after his death.” — *Gibbon*, c. xviii.

† From the Latin *pagus*, a rural district.

‡ Sismondi, *Fall of the Roman Empire* (CAB. Cyc.).

“In this period of the world,” says F. Schlegel*, “in this decisive crisis between ancient and modern times, in this great central point of history, stood two powers opposed to each other :—on one hand we behold the Roman emperors, the earthly gods and absolute masters of the world, in all the pomp and splendour of ancient paganism — standing, as it were, on the very summit and verge of the old world, now tottering to its ruin ;— and, on the other hand, we trace the obscure rise of an almost imperceptible point of light, from which the whole modern world was to spring, and whose further progress and full development, through all succeeding ages, constitutes the true purport of *modern history*.”

“Christianity,” says the same writer, “in its primitive influence, was like an electric stroke, which traversed the world with the rapidity of lightning ;— like a magnetic fluid of life, which united even the most distant members of humanity in one animating pulsation. Public prayer, and the sacred mysteries, formed a stronger and closer bond of love among men than the still sacred ties of kindred and earthly affection. The Christians saw and felt the presence of their invisible King and eternal Lord ; and when their souls overflowed with the plenitude of spiritual and heavenly life, how could they value earthly existence, and how must they not have been willing to sacrifice it in the struggle against the powers of darkness ; for that struggle formed the whole and proper business of their lives? — Hence we can understand the reason of the otherwise incredibly rapid diffusion of Christianity through all the provinces, and even sometimes beyond the limits, of the vast empire of Rome : like a heavenly flame, it ran through all life, kindling, where it found congenial sympathy, all that it touched into a kindred fervour. Hence, along with that mighty spirit of love which produced so rapid a spread of the Christian religion, and which united in the closest bonds the first Christian communities, that energy of faith which in-

* Lectures on the Philosophy of History : Robertson’s translation.

spired such heroic fortitude under the dreadful and oft renewed persecutions of the Romans."

It would have been flagrantly presumptuous, in a work like the present, to have attempted any view of the system and doctrines of Christianity, considered in their divine nature and origin. It is solely in their point of collision with Roman affairs and manners, that we have taken note of the progress and establishment of those doctrines; and in order to complete our scanty notices of that mighty change,—which, if it did not operate, signalised at least, the utter decrepitude and ruin of the ancient polity,—it may be necessary to glance back to the series of struggles sustained by the Christians with the secular authorities in the period preceding the reign of Constantine.

Even before the destruction of Jerusalem, the knowledge of Christianity had been spread by the apostles, and their earliest inspired followers, as far as Gaul and Spain, and even to the borders of India. The dispersion of the Jews by that event either occasioned its farther diffusion to the remotest regions, or rendered them accessible to it. Paul and his followers had, indeed, freed the Christian communion and doctrine entirely from the fetters of Judaism: but the knowledge of the Jewish Scriptures continued indispensable to the perfect comprehension of the Christian scheme; and the general diffusion of that knowledge by the above event was, therefore, the best preparative for the reception of the new Gospel.

What were termed the persecutions before the time of Vespasian, proceeded in general either from the rage of the Jews, from the ill-will of particular provincial rulers, or, like the persecutions of Nero, were passing freaks of capricious tyranny. The regular persecution of the Christians did not begin till they had become a compact body in the empire; which seemed so much the more dangerous, the more closely its members were knit together, and the more the hope of heavenly beatitude outweighed the dread of earthly inflictions.

Amongst the Greeks and Romans, speculative opinions on religious subjects, except in particular instances, were not made objects of persecution; since neither priests or system-mongers, nor mercenary traders in learning (in general the only implacable persecutors of opinions), ever obtained so undue an ascendancy over the government as they have sometimes done in later times. By the Jews the Christians were persecuted as renegades and domestic enemies; by the government as a secret league of desperate enthusiasts, hostile to the system of the state and its order of public worship; by the people as godless aliens, deemed to be capable of the most frightful atrocities; and concerning whose meetings the most revolting rumours were current.* Among these were the orgies ascribed to them by their enemies as *the repasts of Thyestes*, and greedily believed by the populace. These rumours are supposed by some writers to have originated in a vulgar misunderstanding of the Christian sacrament.

The first regular edict which was passed against the Christians was that of Domitian (A. D. 87), which assimilated the offence of dissent from the national religion to the crime of high treason. This atrocious law was relaxed by Nerva, who proclaimed that the denunciations of slaves were not to be taken against their masters in such cases; but, on the contrary, the informers were to be punished. Trajan, who had made a law against all associations which tended to the formation of a state within the state†, decided, on the report of the younger Pliny (A. D. 120), that the Christians — whose numbers in Asia Minor were so considerable even in those times, that their extirpation seemed impossible — were not to be sought after; but that when denounced, they should be punished, according to the purport of the general law of association. In the above-mentioned official report of Pliny, made while he was governor of Pontus and

* Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. 1.

† The emperor Trajan pushed so far his dislike of associations, as to refuse to incorporate a company of 150 *firemen* for the use of the city of Nicomedia.

Bithynia, he wholly acquits the Christians of the monstrous practices laid to their charge ; and writes that, according to the confessions wrung from them by torture, after the Roman manner, they were found indeed to entertain a strange, perverse, and excessive superstition*, but that in other respects they were irreproachable ; and that their custom was to assemble together, in the morning of a certain day of the week (Sunday), to sing the praises of their God, Christ, and to engage themselves to the fulfilment of the most important precepts of virtue ; and that they met again in the evening to enjoy a simple and blameless repast. Every attempt to destroy them but increased their numbers, and added to the internal strength of their league. Under Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius, however, persecution began afresh, probably because both these learned emperors only saw in the Christians illiterate enthusiasts ; and only found in the new doctrine a superstition alien to their philosophy. The more actively however they persecuted, the more disadvantageously they and their school-philosophers, who took part in promoting these persecutions, stood contrasted with the simple Christian teachers and converts ; and the more adhesion was gained to a doctrine, which rulers themselves conspired in this way to raise to more engrossing importance.

The simplicity and sincerity of the earlier converts to Christianity, which procured them the contempt of the learned, unfortunately were followed, in the lapse of years, by qualities more fitted to excite their attention, and to captivate the favour of the refined assemblies of these times. Even philosophers and rhetoricians at length found their account in coming forward as defenders of the new doctrine, so soon as they could hope to adapt it to their Platonic dreams or Aristotelian subtleties, or to turn it to the purposes of declamation. In the East, special establishments arose in those places where celebrated academies already existed, for the

* " Neque enim dubitabam," says Pliny, "*quodcunque esset quod faterentur, pervicaciam certe et inflexibilem obstinationem debere puniri.*"

training of aspirants to the Christian ministry. In Alexandria especially flourished a succession of distinguished teachers, who clothed the Christian doctrine in the garb of philosophy, or rather sought Christian images and expressions as a drapery for their philosophic reveries. Clemens and Origen devised and subtilised, till they had struck out a symbolical and mystical system; and discovered a threefold mode of interpreting Christian doctrine and history. The empress Mammæa, and those about Alexander Severus, as well as himself, did homage to the mystagogue of the Alexandrian school, even if they did not make a formal profession of Christianity.

As the higher ranks of society felt the attraction of the new form of doctrine and of worship; so the lower class of people, and even slaves, to whom heathenism denied the common rights of humanity, were captivated by the announcement of brotherly love and Christian liberty. It is true, that in the increase of the numbers of Christians, their congregational arrangements assumed by degrees an aristocratical form; and the bishops aimed already at a species of absolute dominion; yet the primitive democratical regulations still were in part retained, which naturally assigned to the congregations of the faithful the choice of their spiritual overseers, and the exercise of jurisdiction over all offences of the members of their own body; and the equality of men before God, was still the established principle according to which ecclesiastical offices were distributed, and spiritual influence gained. Slavery was repugnant to the scheme of Christianity; slaves and freedmen accordingly recovered in the spiritual the consideration refused them in the secular state. Add to these, the advantages provided for travellers, widows, orphans, the sick, the poor, by the arrangements of the Christian communities, each of which not only set apart a fund for its own poor, but appointed deacons and deaconesses specially to administer the offices of charity and benevolence. Each community kept up corre-

spondence with the others ; and episcopal recommendations carried the traveller free from Britain to Persia.

For more than a hundred years after the death of the apostles, each Christian community seems to have formed an independent republic, acknowledging no superior or central authority. It was only towards the end of the second century that provincial synods were instituted by the churches of Greece and Asia, "which may justly," says Gibbon, "be supposed to have borrowed the model of a representative council from the celebrated examples of their own country, the Amphictyons, the Achæan League, or the assemblies of the Ionian cities." It soon became the established rule that the bishops of the several churches in each province met twice a year in its capital city, at the stated periods of spring and of autumn. A few of the distinguished elders or presbyters of each church, whose office seems at first to have been co-ordinate with that of the bishops, attended the periodical deliberations of these assemblies ; at which were also present, as hearers, the general body of members of the church.*

The ecclesiastical administration and hierarchy thus gradually came to resemble a vast civic confederation. In this league the highest station was taken by the so called apostolical churches in certain of the cities of first rank in the empire. These federal assemblies, in which deliberation was held on the general affairs of the church, on doubtful points of faith, on regulations of discipline, and which soon, alas! employed much of their zeal in condemning variations of doctrine, and proscribing heretics and apostates, assumed a new aspect and character, when a *quasi* Jewish distinction became established between the priesthood and laity. This distinction had been unknown to the Greeks and Romans. The terms *clerus* and *laicus*, with the corresponding ideas, had already found reception in the time

* Acta Concil. Carthag. apud Cyprian. edit. Fell. p. 158. This council was composed of eighty-seven bishops from the provinces of Mauritania, Numidia, and Africa ; some presbyters and deacons assisted at the assembly ; *præsente plebis maximâ parte.*

of Tertullian ; who asks, however, *Nonne et laici sacerdotes sumus ?* *

Every member of the primitive Christian community must have felt himself, in some sense, invested with the character of a priest and teacher. In the third century, however, the congregation at large retained no part in the appointment to spiritual offices, unless that of confirming the choice of their spiritual superiors. The bishops and their councillors had by that time assumed to themselves the right of nomination of all clerical functionaries, as well as of expulsion from the Christian community. Amongst the bishops of the capital and provincial towns there existed, as we have stated above, a certain subordination of ranks. Some of the chief cities of the ancient world, one of which was Corinth, had obtained a primacy or precedence, which was expressed by the designation of *apostolical churches*. Amongst these apostolical churches, in the East, Jerusalem and Antioch held the first rank, and next Alexandria ; in the West, Rome, asserting her claim to number amongst her preachers and martyrs the *two* most eminent apostles, Peter and Paul, early assumed a priority of rank and importance, though not without a protracted dispute for supremacy with the eastern churches, and the bishop of her old rival, Carthage. Cyprian opposed, with resolution and success, the pretensions of the Roman pontiff, skilfully connected his own cause with that of the eastern bishops, “ and, like Hannibal, sought out new allies in the heart of Asia.” †

In the persecutions previous to the reign of Decius, it had already become a practice to commemorate martyrs, to pay honours to confessors of the faith, to visit their tombs, celebrate their birthdays, sing hymns in their praise, and seek their intercession with the Deity. The Christian republic of these times may be compared to that of Greece in the Persian war : both had for enemies an absolute prince, and a military empire. The Christian constancy and zeal for the faith, corresponded

* Exhort. ad Castitat. c. 7.

† Gibbon.

with the enthusiasm of the old Greeks for political freedom : heroes were replaced by martyrs ; myths by legends. In the third century, when, after a long interval of tranquillity, the persecutions recommenced, one of the most eminent bishops declared that he regarded the external pressure as wholesome, and even necessary for the preservation of purity of manners among Christians.

In like measure, as the moral part of Christianity was postponed to external forms and hierarchical arrangements, it was endeavoured more and more to suit its doctrines and worship to the cravings of sense, and the habits of that increasing number of converts, who were accustomed to mysteries, heathen rites of expiation, and pomps of worship. By these accommodations in forms of worship and ceremonial usages, as well as by the application of philosophic subtleties to points of doctrine, many were brought to interest themselves in Christianity. Another class was attracted by the splendour which surrounded the hierarchy ; the hopes of celebrity as teachers and orators, or of more substantial power as bishops. It is thence obvious that the last persecution, under Diocletian, was extremely impolitic ; and that Constantius and Constantine, if their object was to supplant their rivals, could not take a wiser course than that of putting themselves forward as the champions of the rising creed. They arrayed thus on their side the only organised body which still possessed a principle of life throughout their vast empire.

The doctrines of Christianity, even before it became the state religion, had become more and more fitted, by the establishment of the hierarchy, the introduction of an orthodox standard of doctrine, and the adoption of a splendid outward form of divine service, to the exigencies of popular taste and political expediency. The government was assuming more and more of an oriental character, which also belonged in its origin to Christianity ; while, on the other hand, the ancient state religion of Rome had stood connected, and disappeared

together, with the ancient form of government—with the arts, with the poetry, and philosophy of elder times.

The first immediate consequence of Constantine's conversion to Christianity, was a total revolution in the system of education and public instruction; the superintendence of mental cultivation being transferred to the clergy, though the rhetoricians and sophists, to whom the principal institutions of this kind in Athens, Antioch, and Ephesus, owed their celebrity, remained yet a while faithful to the ancient doctrine. Constantine caused theologians to instruct his sons in their science; and even the amusements of their youth were directed in a manner to render certain mechanical practices of devotion a matter to them of habit and necessity.

With the new mode of instruction was connected the diffusion of belief in the merit of celibacy, and a life of inactive contemplation; a belief which had been formerly very prevalent in the East, but had hitherto been greatly restricted in its range by the establishment of the Roman laws and customs. Love of country, fulfilment of civic duties, active use of property and personal endowments in the public service, had been extolled and recommended as the highest virtue. All regulations made since the time of Constantine were, however, framed in quite another spirit. In order to appreciate the bias of these times in relation to civil affairs and public-spirited actions, it is only necessary to cast a glance upon the writings of the friends and panegyrists of Constantine, whose voices were regarded by himself in some manner as divine oracles. Eusebius, a profoundly learned theologian, and at the same time a consummate courtier, says, "One description of Christians live a higher life than that of the founders of Greek and Roman freedom. This spiritual life and converse rise above human nature. He who has devoted himself to this manner of life knows nothing of marriage and procreation of children; nothing of acquisition and possession of exclusive property. In

one word, he entirely departs from the ordinary manner of life ; and, out of all-conquering love of God, devotes himself wholly to his service. He who has chosen out this life to himself ; who is dead to the lower life of mankind ; who lingers on earth with his body only, and dwells in thought and with his soul in the heavens, looks down on this world as though it were contemptuously, like a deity."

How humiliating a station was assigned to the laity in this comparative estimate of spiritual character, may be judged from the following passage of the same work. "The *lower class*," it is there said, "lives in a manner more human (*ὁ τροπος ἀνθρωπινωτερος*), contracts marriages, procreates children, cares for household concerns, engages in judicial business ; and though even at the same time mindful of piety, carries on trade, agriculture, and other concerns of civil life ; and for learning and hearing the word of God, has appointed certain fixed days only."

These dangerous maxims respecting the relative value of useful activity in affairs public and private, and of contemplative abstraction from both, might be harmless enough as an individual sentiment or doctrine ; might even indeed be salutary, if applied in the proper place and manner ; but they could not fail to produce effects the most mischievous, so soon as they were formally recognised by Constantine, and laid down as a basis of political regulations. Constantine himself might have learned how pernicious in effect may be doctrines, which could not at that time be contested in theory, from the results of the experiment which he made in exempting the Christian clergy from the obligation of discharging onerous civil duties and public functions. The effect soon was, that people of property and influence, exactly those, in short, who were alone able to execute offices requiring superintendence or outlay, took advantage of this law to avoid the honours and burthens of office, by entering the sacred profession. This abuse he endeavoured to prevent by means of another law, which, if

it had been carried into effect, would have been no less prejudicial to religion than to industry. He ordered that, in Italy, the poorer class only should be received into the Christian clergy; and all families capable of civil functions, or wealthy enough to fill offices involving expense, should be excluded from the clerical order. However, notwithstanding the experience acquired in Italy, Constantine conceded in the province of Africa exemption from all public burthens, not only to the higher clergy, but even to readers and subdeacons, without limiting admission to the clerical order by any restriction; and, according to his own words in this very decree, he had already previously made the same regulation for the East. The consequences of such regulations were soon very perceptible. There every where arose a superabundance of monks, and all sorts of ecclesiastical functionaries; the deficiency which took place was in able and active public officers, in civil servants, and military defenders of their country. We find barbarians in all employments where energy was necessary.

The advance of the clergy in wealth attended their liberation from public burthens. It was presupposed, indeed, that the enriched clergy would provide for objects hitherto neglected by the state; by alms, by the establishment of charitable institutions, by hospitals, houses of reception for strangers and travellers, and Christian schools. It evinced, however, great short-sightedness to expect much good from sacerdotal administration in this department. The active or laborious citizen was impoverished to provide for the inert and slothful; the state devolved cares which appertained to itself on the clergy, which abused its powers only too soon; and monks and priests obtained just such an influence as in modern Spain over a mass of loiterers and beggars, women, and men resembling women. It is true, that almshouses and asylums for the aged and infirm poor, hospitals, and houses for the reception of strangers and orphans, were erected under priestly super-

intendence. The urgent need of such institutions is, however, a sure evidence of priestly rule and administration, which loves better to relieve the misery it helps to create, than to obviate its occurrence by means of strenuous and active exertion. We may conceive the influence gained by the body of clergy generally; the ease with which they contrived to turn their controversies and quarrels into a matter of supreme public importance; to direct against heretics and holders of erroneous tenets those energies which ought to have been employed against the foreign enemy; and to proscribe and persecute every free thought and independent spirit, when we view the number and extent of the charitable foundations which stood under their superintendence. Gregory of Nazianzen boasted, for example, of the famous preacher and rhetorician Basilius of Cæsarea, that he had set up an establishment of this description of such magnitude as might be likened to a town, and which was called Basilius after its founder.

As charitable gifts and foundations were encouraged by the popular doctrine, which enjoined the sacrifice of outward goods for the good of the soul, and the renunciation of temporal in order to ensure eternal joys, so monastic habits also may be traced to the like origin. Whoever with the most rigour secluded himself from human society, satisfied none of the social duties, tortured himself with most ingenuity, was regarded as a saint; and the Christian penitents were sought out from all sides in the lonely regions whither they fled; their words were regarded as oracular, their acts as miraculous. These solitaries were spread over the whole East; and held in the higher honour, the more sternly they opposed themselves to every thing in the order of civil society that did not seem to correspond with their singular notions of Christian holiness. These pattern heroes of monkery were, by preference, selected for preferment to bishoprics, of which they were often in a manner constrained to the acceptance. The influence

of the maxims of these men on the concerns of life was greatly increased, when Constantine withdrew them from the secular jurisdiction, and conceded to them one of their own.

The clergy would very gladly have introduced into the West the eastern fashion of freedom from all worldly sway and subordination. This, however, was too repugnant to the Roman laws and usages; they were forced to be content with certain favours and immunities. The ecclesiastical jurisdiction in affairs of this world took rise in the times previous to Constantine, and belonged to the first family arrangements of the Christian community. It was originally nothing more than a mode of arbitration. Both parties agreed to call in the teacher of their little community, the head of their assemblies, as the arbiter of their differences, without prejudicing the rights of the regular tribunals. After the time of Constantine the bishop's court became a kind of equity court, of which the jurisdiction, according to Sozomen, Constantine decreed should be recognised by the regular tribunals, and the judgments of which were without appeal. These innovations occasioned great abuses and grievous complaints. The more pious and upright of the bishops themselves complained of being burthened with a mass of worldly and legal business; the laity complained that the teachers of piety and humility set up claims to co-ordinate authority with the secular powers. The abuses which arose from these decrees of Constantine induced his successors to restrict the judicial competence of the bishops. The same pernicious effect which was produced by the reliance of Constantine on episcopal administration of justice, was enhanced by the outward marks of consideration which he paid to that order, and the precedence he assigned to them at court and in his private intercourse. Eusebius clearly indicates the rapid change effected by the transformation of bishops into dignitaries of state, when, in the passage where he states that Constantine invited the bishops to his table, and commonly took some of them

about with him in travelling, he adds that these attentions were paid, *although* the bishops at that period were still extremely simple in their outward array. The apparel, the attendance, the whole exterior, in short, of the order underwent no less change under Constantine than their tone of discourse, which became, instead of mild, humble, and apostolic, quarrelsome, disputatious, and damnatory. The emperors were easily drawn into these theological controversies, by the assurance that they would merit divine favour by securing the ascendancy of the true faith by what means soever. From these imperial interferences in spiritual matters there resulted two evils, alike perilous to the church and the state ; — the increase of the power and the authority of the bishops of Rome, and the incessant convocation of ecclesiastical assemblies under the denominations of special or general synods and councils.

The spirit of obscure and monkish speculation, indigenous to the East from time immemorial, was at this time ascendant in the Greek church. The same schools which, shortly before, had been fighting about letters and syllables, were now engaged on the delicate distinctions of the Arian controversy, and the mysterious *Homoousion* of the Nicene synod. There would be nothing strange in debates of this kind, even in our own times ; but controversies of the sort did not stop within the walls of the schools : the laity took such vehement part in disputes on the barrenest points of doctrine, that the pagans delighted to turn their altercations into farce on the theatre. Arius and Alexander both made adherents to their opinions, and despatched incessant epistles and embassies to all united in their communion. Egypt also, the father-land of fanaticism, was torn to pieces by another contest — that of the Meletians. In the East, the proper time for the festival of Easter, and the doctrine of repentance and remission of sins, were made matter of endless altercation. From thenceforwards, especially after the death of Constantine, and under the govern-

ment of his sons, the dispute whether the subtleties of Arius, or those of Athanasius, should prevail in the churches, was viewed as an affair of the highest importance to the empire. There was no end of councils, conferences, and assemblies; and the public treasury was exhausted to bear the expenses of these meetings, which, according to high ecclesiastical testimony in those times (that of the good bishop Gregory of Nazianzen), were rather hurtful than useful to Christianity.

The scandalous details of these ecclesiastical assemblies are, however, relieved by occasional traits, which show that independence of spirit, strength of soul and character, are never wholly lost among men, however wretched be the state of the times. The court which, since the days of Tiberius, had been accustomed to meet only adulation and meanness, now and then experienced opposition, at least from the Christian clergy; and the cause of humanity sometimes found intrepid defenders in monks and bishops.

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